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*Memoirs of the Rev. John
Wesley Etheridge*

Thornley Smith, John Wesley Etheridge



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MEMOIRS
OF THE
REV. JOHN WESLEY ETHERIDGE,
M.A., PH.D.

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OF THE
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I am
yours most truly
John W. Wherridge

Reviews

THE LIFE OF LORD PETER RUSSELL

By J. H. B. HARRIS

London, 1914.

2 vols. 8vo. 10s. 6d. (net).

ANDERSON & CO., LTD., 10, MARK LANE.

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I am

most respectfully
John W. Herdridge

Memoirs

OF THE REV.

JOHN WESLEY ETHERIDGE,

M.A., PH.D.

INCLUDING

EXTRACTS FROM HIS WRITINGS, CORRESPONDENCE,
AND POETRY.

BY THE

REV. THORNLEY SMITH,

AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORIES OF JOSEPH, MOSES, AND JOSHUA,"
ETC., ETC.



LONDON:

HODDER AND STOUGHTON,
27, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCLXXI.

210. k. 64.

‘ HE DOUBTED NOT OF THE TRUTH OF THE PROMISES, NOR OF THE GOODNESS OF GOD, NOR THE SATISFACTION OF CHRIST, AND THE MERITS OF HIS DEATH, NOR THE FRUIT OF HIS RESURRECTION, NOR THE PREVALENCY OF HIS INTERCESSION, NOR YET DOUBTED OF HIS OWN PART IN THEM: BUT EXPECTED HIS PORTIONS IN THE REGIONS OF BLESSEDNESS, WITH THOSE WHO LOVED GOD, AND SERVED HIM HEARTILY AND FAITHFULLY IN THEIR GENERATION.”

Bishop Jeremy Taylor.

Watson & Hazell, Printers, London and Aylesbury.

P R E F A C E.

THAT a record of the life of Dr. Etheridge should be published has long been the wish of many of his friends. I was informed by one who knew him well that if I would undertake the preparation of it, his relatives would place in my hands such MSS. as they possessed, and that other materials might probably be obtained. The MSS. were sent to me. They consisted of a number of letters and other documents, including two volumes entitled "Generalia," which contain extracts from various writers, original notes, and poetry, none of which has ever been published. But no diary or journal was found among the papers, and if any such was ever kept it was of the most private nature, and not intended for the public eye. For the loan of these documents I am indebted to Mrs. Hollis, and Mr. Etheridge, of Newport, Isle of Wight; and for

several valuable letters and reminiscences, my thanks are due to Miss Cooke, the Rev. G. Leale, C. Garland, Esq., of Penzance, and M. G. Pearce, Esq., now of London. From the valuable history of Methodism in the Isle of Wight, by the Rev. J. B. Dyson, I have taken several passages contributed by Dr. Etheridge relative to his family; and other ministers, whose names will be found in the work, have also favoured me with recollections of his ministerial life.

I had proceeded with the preparation of the memoirs to some extent, when I was informed by the Rev. W. B. Boyce that Mrs. Ellis, of Maida Vale, London, had in her possession a considerable number of letters written by the Doctor, which she greatly prized, but which she was willing to lend me, to make use of as I thought best. A correspondence ensued with that excellent lady, which I shall long remember; and to her my thanks are given for the valuable records which I have thus been enabled to insert. These letters I will not characterize; they shall speak for themselves; but they form a prominent feature of the Memoir, and will, I doubt not, be read by many with delight and profit.

Another contribution was offered by the Rev. Dr. Hoole—the chapter on the Hebrew scholarship of Dr. Etheridge, which was altogether unexpected and to him I present my sincere acknowledgments for this favour, feeling assured that my

readers who take any interest in Biblical studies will highly appreciate that chapter.

Among the MSS. of Dr. Etheridge are several valuable lectures on Romanism, which, in the first instance, I thought of publishing in this volume. But the Memoir became too extended to permit of that, and consequently the lectures must appear, as I hope they will, in a separate form. I have, however, appended to the Memoir a series of outline lessons, or lectures on the patriarchs, which I have transcribed from his MSS. as carefully as I could.

The portrait which adorns this volume is from an oil painting, now in the possession of Dr. Hoole. It is, I believe, a faithful one; but it was taken in the earlier period of his ministerial life. Two vignettes are introduced into the work;—one his birth-place, and the other of Penzance Bay, about two miles from which his remains rest.

From the venerable Thomas Jackson I received the following letter, for the insertion of which I need not apologise.

LONDON, *Nov. 8th*, 1870.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I am gratified to learn that you have in hand a biography of the late Dr. Etheridge. It grieves me when men eminently gifted and useful disappear from our ranks,

and no one supplies a record of their noble doings. I am sorry that I cannot give you any information concerning this very excellent man, having had little or no intercourse with him at any period of his life. I remember him as a popular young man in London some forty years ago ; and, since then I do not remember to have seen him more than once or twice ; but from what I have read of his publications, and hearing him deliver a missionary sermon, and a speech at a missionary meeting, I formed a high opinion of his scholarship and personal sanctity. Wishing you every success in your undertaking, and permanency to the revival of religion of which you speak,

I am, my dear brother,

Yours very sincerely,

THOMAS JACKSON.

It was because I shared in the grief expressed by Mr. Jackson at the thought of such men passing away without a record of their lives, that I was induced to undertake this Memoir ; but I confess that I should have rejoiced had some one more competent performed the task. I send it forth, however, with the hope that it will tend to promote the glory of that Saviour whom it was the delight and joy of Dr. Etheridge to preach. It is the portrait of a noble life drawn,

in part, though undesignedly, by his own hand, and filled up by several friends, to which I have only given the framework, with a few touches to the picture here and there. If it wears an air of sadness now and then, yet it is not the sadness of the misanthrope, but of the Christian under the discipline of a Father's hand ; whilst often joy beams in every feature, and hope—the hope of a glorious immortality—inspires the soul.

T. S.

SWANSEA, *May 1st*, 1871.

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THE BIRTHPLACE.

MEMOIR.

CHAPTER I.

The Boy.

AMONG the several islets of Great Britain one of the most attractive is the Isle of Wight. This isle forms part of the county of Hampshire, but is separated from the mainland by a narrow arm of the sea, called the Solent. It is thirty-three miles in length and thirteen in breadth ; and is traversed by a ridge of chalky downs, on which many thousands of fine woolled sheep are bred. For the beauty of its scenery and the salubrity of its climate it has become one of the most favourite resorts of summer tourists, whilst the Undercliffe, on its southern side, is so mild, even in winter, that it is often chosen as a residence by consumptive invalids. Both the naturalist and the geologist find here a field for their pursuits, and to the artist it presents some very grand and majestic views,

besides many a bit of rural scenery on which the pencil of a Birkett Foster might be well employed. That it should be one of the abodes of royalty is not surprising, and for a Laureate no more quiet or more charming spot could well be thought of than Farringford at Freshwater, where, doubtless, the story of Enoch Arden was penned; a rough sailor lad, who, with the miller's only son,

play'd

Among the waste and lumber of the shore,
Hard coils of cordage, swarthy fishing-nets,
Anchors of rusty fluke, and boats updrawn;
And built their castles of dissolving sand
To watch them overflow'd, or following up
And flying the white breaker, daily left
The little footprint daily washed away.

The principal town of the island is Newport, which is situated nearly in its centre. About four miles from Newport, on a road which branches off from that leading to Yarmouth, is a pretty farm-house called Youngwoods, where, on the 24th of February, 1804, was born JOHN WESLEY ETHERIDGE, the subject of the present Memoir. I visited the spot a few months ago, and was given to understand that the house has undergone no change in its general aspect, and, as I sat down in the garden to take a sketch of it, I felt a kind of veneration for the place, and

was glad that I had been permitted to see it for myself. The birthplaces of some very eminent men are unknown, those of many others have been swept away by the hand of Time ; but that of Dr. Etheridge still stands, and is a pleasant spot for the eye to look on.

The parents of this child were devoted Methodists, and from the first introduction of Methodism into the island their house was ever open to its ministers. His father, to quote his own words, "was the son of William and Hannah Etheridge of Youngwoods and Colemans, two small estates (in what was then called the Royal Forest of Parkhurst), which have long ago passed away from our family. He was their only child, and was born in 1765, at a somewhat advanced period of their life,—circumstances which rendered him the object of their strong and concentrated affection, the influence of which is not always propitious to the real welfare of either the parents or the child. He received his education at an academy in Newport, kept by a clergyman named Potecary ; and, designed for the hereditary employment of his forefathers, on leaving school was trained to the affairs of agriculture, and sought his recreation in hunting, fishing, and the sports of the field, and the homely intercourse of a few wide-scattered rustic families. These forest people lived

at a long distance from their parish church, and had but scanty opportunities for hearing the gospel ; till their slumberous condition as to eternal things was broken in upon by the coming of the Methodist preachers into the neighbourhood. It may be said that then 'a voice was heard crying in the wilderness.' Among those who were drawn to listen was my father, and in it he discerned the voice of God. He was then about eighteen years of age. The first of the preachers he heard was Mr. Barber. The word came to him with saving effect. The Lord laid His hand on him, and found him willing in the day of His power. A great change unfolded itself in his life. He told his former companions that he had been constrained to give up his sins, and wished to know whether they would do the same, as otherwise he must consort with them no more. Already he felt the movements of the evangelist within him, and, beginning in this humble way, was made meet for greater things. His parents received the preachers, and Youngwoods became one of their welcome homes. His father entered on the regular work of a local preacher, and, having a good horse at his command, traversed the length and breadth of the island, and had honourable fellowship in the labours of those faithful men who laid the foundations of those now

long-established Christian societies which have been made such a blessing to its towns and hamlets. He applied himself with great diligence to the cultivation of his mind, was a close reader of well-chosen authors, as I gather from one of his old commonplace books; and his manuscript sermons, written in a small elegant Italian hand, show by their clear statement of the great truths of the gospel that he did not read in vain. He had not only the friendship of the preachers who itinerated in the island; but the venerable founder of Methodism, on his visits to the island, encouraged him by his kind and paternal words. Discerning in him a young man whose life should be devoted to the ministry, Mr. Wesley proposed to him to enter upon the full work of it. As nothing seemed to stand in the way, his name was set down at the following Conference for what was then called the Salisbury Circuit. But his aged mother shrunk from the pain of losing him, and, whether right or wrong, he yielded to her distress and declined to go. This he ever after regarded as an error which entailed upon him not a little providential chastisement. Nevertheless he still continued the steady labour of preaching in all parts of the island, as well as several stations on the other side of the water—at Portsmouth, Southampton, Romsey, the New Forest,

Winchester, and away as far as Salisbury. He pursued this work many years, and did substantial service in the church in fulfilling the offices of leader and steward. In his declining years he lived in greater retirement, but walked humbly with God. His wife was Alley, the daughter of George Gray, an old officer in the navy, who had seen much battle work under Nelson and Howe, and whose four sons attained commissions in the same service, the eldest dying flag-lieutenant at the bombardment of Copenhagen."*

"Heaven lies about us in our infancy," and the guardianship of angels over little children seems to be implied in Matt. xviii. 19, where our Lord assures us that the angels of such children "do always behold the face of His Father who is in heaven." "In what other way," says the late Mr. Stuart of America, "can we reasonably interpret this, except as assigning to little children presence-angels, or angels of the highest order, as their guardians and protectors?" Hence, and surely not to mere chance, may we account for the many instances of deliverance from great peril of children who have afterwards become good, holy, and eminently

* Dyson's "Methodism in the Isle of Wight," pp. 151—153. To this valuable little work Dr. Etheridge contributed these and other facts.

useful persons, as of John Wesley from the fire at Epworth. When John Wesley Etheridge was yet an infant, his father, having set out from home one Sunday morning to fulfil an appointment in a distant part of the circuit, was impressed with the thought that he ought to turn back. He did not wish, however, to disappoint his congregation and tried therefore to resist the impression ; but it seemed to him as if a voice said, Go back ; go back. He therefore went back, and, on inquiring for the child, found that he had fallen into such danger that had he not been rescued immediately he must have died. To describe the joy of the father's heart is quite impossible, but he never forgot the incident, and spoke of it himself to an eminent minister some years before his death.

It has been assumed by some, that children must necessarily know evil before they know good, but Charles Wesley puts into the lips of children the following words :—

O take us up into Thine arms,
And we are truly bless'd ;
Thy new-born babes are safe from harms,
While harbour'd in Thy breast.

There let us ever, ever sleep,
Strangers to guilt and care ;
Free from the world of evil, keep
Our tender spirits there.

Still, as we grow in years, in grace
And wisdom let us grow ;
But never leave Thy dear embrace,
But never evil know.*

Nor is this an unmeaning prayer. There are thousands of children taught from their infancy to fear and love God who, though naturally depraved like other children, are nevertheless preserved from open and even from secret sin, and are gradually led into the full enjoyment of God's justifying and sanctifying grace. His sister's testimony is, that John Wesley Etheridge was "a child of a gracious disposition, remarkable for great tenderness of conscience and for filial piety." And if a child's conscience is kept tender he is easily led into a right path, for conscience is then like a golden cord by which you may conduct him where you will. To quote again his own words, he says, "My mother, who was a saint, took me when a child along with her to the class-meeting, where the earliest sound impressions I ever felt came upon my heart." "To class when a child!" some would say, "how could a child benefit by such a means of grace so far beyond his comprehension and experience?" But this child says that he did benefit by it, and I have known other children taken by pious

* Poetical Works of J. and C. Wesley, vol. vi. p. 448.

mothers to that peculiar ordinance of Methodism, and there feeling the dew of heaven resting on their minds and the light of the Spirit renovating their hearts. We are apt to underestimate the piety of children, and even their capacity for understanding experimental religion, but I hope the day is not far distant when the Methodist churches will pay them more honour, and instead of ignoring their baptism, and looking upon it as a mere form, as I fear is often done, will acknowledge it as the rite of initiation into the fellowship of the church, and recognise those who receive it as, in some way, members of the church.

John Wesley Etheridge lived from his childhood in the fear of God ; but it was not until he had reached the age of sixteen that the further grace was given to him—the sense of sweet forgiving love. Then, however, he realised it, and soon after, writing to a relative at a distance, and telling her of his blessed experience, he said “ All mankind are my friends ; I have not an enemy in the world.” That is to say, he loved every one, and he therefore concluded that every one loved him. And this sense of his acceptance in the Beloved he retained to the latest day of his life.

His first and *only* class-leader was Mr. Robert Bull, who was converted to God at Rookley whilst yet a youth, and afterwards became a zealous local preacher and a most

judicious leader of a class. He had removed to Newport, "where he was appointed general Society Steward for the island until it became a circuit, and was found in all weathers, at the Portsmouth Quarterly Meeting, the esteemed and faithful representative of that part of the circuit."* The youth, who now joined his little band, afterwards wrote of him as follows: "This well-trying servant of Jesus Christ was a pillar and ornament in the church. He knew and made known the saving and elevating power of divine grace, and showed in his own example how practicable and pleasant it is, when faithful to it, to be not slothful in business, yet fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. As a leader, he had one of the most choice and amiable classes I ever met with. I had the privilege of being a member of it some years, and shall retain evermore the memory of the good lessons we used to derive from his sagacious and faithful counsels. But it was as a preacher he was best known and respected in the island. His well-trying character, his somewhat clerical appearance, and, shall I say, gentlemanly deportment, contributed to give him weight as a public teacher. He was a man of extensive reading, a healthy, clear thinker, gifted with a good address, and above all,

* Dyson's "Methodism in the Isle of Wight," p. 273.

with the unction of the Holy Spirit of God. So, though he never sought 'popularity,' he was always 'popular,'—not for a transient hour, but for the lapse of numerous years. This was the case, not only in the rural congregations, but in the towns of the island. I remember 'when Mr. Bull preached' in Newport, the congregation was generally larger than at other times, and was sometimes attended by persons who belonged to the aristocracy of the town, including gentlemen of the medical and legal professions. But none of these flattering circumstances disturbed the uniform sobriety and meekness of his temper, for God had given him not only the spirit of power, but of love, and a sound mind." *

To have been favoured with the Christian counsel and advice of such a man as Robert Bull must have been a great privilege, and young Etheridge knew how to appreciate it and how to profit by it. He used to say, "Mr. Bull's wise and Christian advice was to me an inestimable advantage." And he valued the class-meeting, and punctually attended it. His was not the half-hearted piety which can be content with the fellowship of saints once or twice a quarter, but a deep-seated principle which led him

* Dyson's "Methodism in the Isle of Wight," pp. 276-7.

to thirst after communion with sincere Christians as helpful to communion with Christ Himself. He understood to some extent, even in early life, the profound language of the beloved disciple, St. John : "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us ; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." (1 John i. 3.)

No class-leader having youthful members under his charge can tell what they may subsequently become. Mr. Bull may have seen in J. W. Etheridge the promise of considerable good, but little did he think of the eminence in the church the youth would afterwards attain. It was to him an honour to have been the only leader of such a young man, and probably before he died, which was on the 25th of March, 1836, he often rejoiced in spirit as he saw that young man entering the Christian ministry and becoming so able a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let our class-leaders look well to the young men of their charge. For who of them can tell whether, in the little band he meets from week to week, there may not be one who is destined to occupy some honourable position in the church in future years ? "He was one of my members," I have heard an old leader say, when some distinguished minister or other agent of the church has been spoken of ; "he was in my

class, and he was a wise lad. I often thought he would make something out." Be faithful, then, ye leaders, and many shall be the crown of your rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus. You shall see your once youthful band coming from fields of Christian toil, some perhaps from far distant regions of the earth, with golden sheaves to lay at the Master's feet, and, when they meet you, they will say, "You prepared us for our work, and you shall share with us in our joy."

CHAPTER II.

The Student and the Minister.

OUR schools and schoolmasters generally determine our future course in life. If a youth is favoured with a right training he gets a certain bent of mind towards the beautiful and the good, which he has only to cultivate to form for himself a noble character. It is a happy thing, therefore, when a parent can select for his son a really good school, taught by a judicious Christian master. Every parent cannot do this, for many an one must be content to send his children to the school which is the most conveniently situated, whether it be exactly suitable or not. A *Christian education* is not yet within the reach of the majority of our youth, whatever may be the case in future years. The means, however, of obtaining a fair education based on right principles for the rising race of this country are increasing, and it is to be hoped that, ere long, England will be second to no nation in the world for affording to all classes oppor-

tunities of being educated for the duties and obligations of the Christian life.

John Wesley Etheridge was placed at school for a time under the care of the Rev. M. Neave, a Baptist minister at Portsea, under whose tuition he remained until his father opened an academy there, which was subsequently removed to Newport. Under his father's guidance, then, he prosecuted a course of study which laid the foundation of that intense thirst for knowledge which characterised him in after life. This was doubtless a great privilege, for Mr. Etheridge was well-qualified for the work of teaching, his eminent piety being combined with an aptitude for imparting instruction which few possess ; and we may be sure that to train the mind of his own son would be to him a great joy.

But young Etheridge was a student after he left school, and indeed to the very close of his life. He possessed a superior mind, which ripened gradually as life advanced. "Some persons," says Archbishop Whately, "resemble certain trees, such as the nut, which flowers in February and ripens its fruit in September ; or the juniper and the arbutus, which take a whole year or more to perfect their fruit ; and others the cherry, which takes between two and three months." I do not know that there was anything precocious in young Etheridge, or that he ripened very

rapidly ; but certain it is that he soon manifested a taste for the highest pursuits of literature, and an aptitude for the acquisition of languages possessed by comparatively few. He not only became familiar with the Greek and Latin languages, but with French and German ; with Hebrew, Syriac, and the cognate dialects ; and with Biblical and Rabbinical literature in all their branches. He never went to college or even to a high-class school, yet Oxford, Cambridge, or any other University, might well have been proud of him. He was to a great extent self-taught, yet his knowledge was deep, not superficial ; and a glance at some of his works, and especially at his "Introduction to the Targums on the Pentateuch," shows that from the first he must have gone to the bottom of things, and not merely skimmed their surface. 10

In the year 1824 he was placed on the plan as a local preacher, and was soon highly esteemed in that capacity in several parts of the island. Among the celebrities of the neighbourhood was an excellent man of the name of Robert Yelf, who, seeing in young Etheridge the promise of future eminence, took him by the hand and helped him forward in his preparations for the great work to which he was himself called. Of this excellent man Dr. E. afterwards wrote as follows :—

The greater part of his long life was devoted to the attainment and communication of knowledge, as a teacher of the young and an able preacher of the word of God. When I first became intimate with him he was a bachelor approaching sixty years of age, with white short-cut hair, a shaven face, which wore the physiognomy of a Roman Catholic abbé, and a long brown surtout, his invariable garb. He lived aloft, in a remote room of a large old-fashioned house near the church. The apartment was lined with books, about one-half of them in the French language. He could read the Greek Testament, and had some acquaintance with Hebrew and Latin ; but his great delight was to explore the treasures of French theological literature, both Catholic and Protestant. I spent two afternoons a week with him steadily for four years, in the course of which we read the works of some of our great English divines, among whom I remember Stillingfleet's "Origines," Gale's "Court of the Gentiles," and Cudworth's "Intellectual System of the Universe" ; and these were intermitted with the choicest pieces of Bourdaloue, Masillon, Bossuet, and that too-little-known but magnificent Protestant preacher, Du Bose. I possess, as a purchase from Mr. Yelf, the works of the Port Royalist Nicole, in twenty delicious little volumes, in old dark gilded calf. He made me, too, some costly presents, among which I prize Du Pin's "Library of Ecclesiastical Authors," in sixteen volumes, quarto. Next to Adam Clarke's work, his favourite commentary was that of Calmet, of which he had a fine copy, in nine tall folios. Mr. Yelf was a purely extempore preacher, having written scarcely a sermon in his life ; but his discourses were rich in material, and delivered in a tone of authority which bespoke the strength of his own convictions, and often brought

the truth with greater power to the minds of his hearers. When a middle-aged man, Dr. Coke set his eyes upon him as a desirable missionary for Gibraltar ; but he preferred to live and labour on in the sphere in which Heaven had first cast his lot. He worthily fulfilled the task, and went to his reward.*

Such was one of the schoolmasters of John Wesley Etheridge ; nor is it possible to estimate the influence he exerted upon his expanding mind. The two afternoons a week, spent in reading such works as those mentioned above, must have been of immense service to the young student, and very striking must have been the picture of this good man, upwards of sixty, "in the remote room of the old-fashioned house," explaining to his *protégé* some of the deeper mysteries of theology. God works by various means, and Robert Yelf was one of the instruments He employed in the training of the future author of "The Introduction to Hebrew Literature."

The entrance into the Wesleyan ministry is by no means easy. I have heard a story of a young German student, who one Sunday night went into Great Queen Street Chapel, London. The Rev. Richard Reece occupied the pulpit, the congregation was large, and the service deeply impressive. "What a fine thing it must be to be a Methodist preacher,"

* Dyson's "Methodism in the Isle of Wight," p. 227.

thought the young German ; and on the following morning he went again to the chapel, and inquired for the residence of the minister. He was introduced into his presence, and said that he came to ascertain in what way he could become a Wesleyan minister, as he thought that it would be "a very nice thing." Mr. Reece very characteristically began to take him through the several steps by which he could arrive at the gate of the palace ; but it was more than enough, and ere long the young German took up his hat, bade good morning, and made all possible haste from the room. No ! it is not an easy thing to get into the ministry of the Methodist Church, and I sincerely hope that it never will be. The right of proposing a candidate to the Quarterly Meeting belongs to the superintendent minister of the Circuit, and that meeting is the representative meeting of the laity of the church by which every candidate for the ministry must be accepted ere he can be further recommended to the District Meeting and the Conference. The Rev. J. Phoenix was now the superintendent minister of the Newport Circuit, and deemed it his duty and his honour to nominate Mr. Etheridge to the March Quarterly Meeting of 1826. I have been informed that no one opposed the nomination, but that the lay members did not vote. Whether they wanted discernment

to see the fitness of the candidate, or whether they did not wish to lose him from the neighbourhood, I do not know ; but it was a strange incident, and might have been attended with considerable mischief. By the District Meeting and the Conference, however, Mr. Etheridge was cordially accepted ; and, the number of candidates being greater than the demand, he was placed on the President's list of reserve.

The Theological Institution had not yet been established, or Mr. Etheridge would probably have become a student in it. But he had not long to wait for an appointment. The Rev. R. Watson was the ex-President of 1827, and, being on a visit to the Isle of Wight, had an interview with him, and promised that he would recommend him for the first vacancy that occurred. Not long after, the Rev. Dr. Beaumont, who was then stationed at Hull, required assistance in consequence of the state of his health, and Mr. Etheridge was sent to that important sphere of labour. No ordinary young man would have been thought eligible for the post ; but Mr. Etheridge was not an ordinary young man, and though he went to Hull with a somewhat fearful heart, he proved a most efficient supply, even for a minister so popular as Dr. Beaumont. The Rev. J. Rigg was the Superintendent of the Circuit, and received the young

evangelist with all possible kindness, treated him with the affection of a father, and encouraged him on his entrance upon the work before him.

Among his MSS. are several lectures on the Epistle to the Hebrews, dated Hull, 1828, which were no doubt delivered in that town. Mr. Etheridge saw, from his first entering the Christian ministry, the importance of consecutive teaching, and of the careful exposition of the sacred Scriptures. Very diligently, therefore, did he labour to unfold to the people of his charge this portion of the inspired writings; and the lectures, which now lie before me, must have been highly instructive to those who heard them, for they contain some very luminous views of several difficult passages in this epistle, combined with powerful applications of the truth. As specimens of the whole, I introduce the following :—

Heb. i. 6. "When He bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him." This is a quotation from the 97th Psalm, where the original Hebrew is so rendered by the LXX., with a very small variation of the words, and none whatever in the meaning. By a reference to that psalm you will perceive that the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of David, speaks of God "bringing in His first-begotten into the world," and the establishment of His kingdom by Him. A kingdom is described wherein God would reign,

when idolatry should be destroyed, and the isles of the Gentiles should rejoice, when light and holiness should increase, and the glory of God be manifested to the ends of the earth. And, calling on the whole creation to exult in the introduction of this kingdom into the world, having pressed His exhortation upon men on earth, He turns to the angels of glory, and calls on them to magnify and worship the same King. "When He bringeth in," introduceth, by His incarnation, by His resurrection, and by the proclamation of the gospel, "the first-begotten into the world, He saith,"—observe the authority, "God saith,"—"let all the angels of God worship Him." The word, προσκυνήσατε, employed here, is nowhere used in the New Testament but for religious adoration. It properly denotes to bow-down, and when it refers to God it respects the inward reverence and subjection of the spirit. Now He who is to be worshipped is, without controversy, greater than they whose duty it is to worship Him. The declaration here cited is therefore a clear proof of the pre-eminence of the Messiah above the highest created beings, since *they* are commanded to adore Him.*

Heb. ii. 11—15. Now, continues the apostle, in consequence of this incarnation of the Son of God, Jesus, the *great sanctifier*, who redeems and consecrates men to the service of God, and they who are thus *sanctified*, *i.e.*, consecrated and

* Whether the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews cited the words directly from the 97th Psalm, or from Deut. xxxii. 43, where they occur in the LXX., though not in the Hebrew, has been a disputed point. The probability is that he had both passages in view; but the argument above is not touched by this question. Compare Tholuck, Alford, and Delitzsch on the passage.—T. S.

introduced to God with such acceptance, *are all of one nature or family*—all the descendants of Adam, and in a sense the seed of Abraham ; for *which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren*, saying in the person of David (Psalm xxii. 22—26), when representing the Messiah in His sufferings and exaltation, “ *I will declare Thy name to My brethren*,” in the midst of the assembly of the people, the great assembly, which by way of eminence shall be called *the church*, will I praise Thee, for Thy gracious interposition in My favour. *And again*, speaking as a mortal man exposed to such exercises of faith in trials and difficulties as others were, He says, in a psalm which represents His triumph over His enemies, *I will trust in Him* as other good men in all ages have done ; *and again*, elsewhere, in the person of Isaiah (viii. 18), “ *Behold, I and the children which God hath given Me are for signs and for wonders*.” Seeing, then, those whom He represents in one place and another as *the children of the same family with Himself*, are *partakers of flesh and blood, i.e., human nature*, *He Himself in like manner participated of them*, and assumed all their sinless infirmities, *that*, thereby becoming capable of those sufferings to which, without such a union with flesh, He could not have been exposed, *He might*, by His own voluntary and meritorious death, *abolish and depose him* who, by divine permission, had the empire of death, and led it in his train when he made his first invasion on mankind, *that is the devil*, the great agent of destruction at the beginning, the murderer of the human race, who still seems to triumph in the spread of mortality, which is his work, and who may often, by God’s righteous permission, be the executioner of it. But Christ, the great Prince of mercy and life, graciously interposed, that He *might deliver them*, his miserable captives, who

through fear of death were, or justly might have been, *all their lifetime obnoxious to bondage*, having nothing to expect in consequence of it, if they rightly understood their state, but future misery, when now delivered by Him from the tyranny of death, they are become the heirs of eternal life.

By intelligent congregations, such as Mr. Etheridge found in Hull, these expositions would doubtless be appreciated. That we should meet with congregations who do not appreciate expository preaching is much to be regretted, but such is the fact; and perhaps some young ministers are deterred from attempting it because their flocks are comparatively indifferent to it. Ought they then to yield to their distaste? Assuredly not, but rather should they try to remove that distaste, by endeavouring to make their expositions as clear and as instructive as possible; and though the result may be that they will be less popular preachers for a while, yet, in the end, their ministry will be the more useful and the more edifying, and therefore members of their churches will bless God for their ministrations.

Mr. Etheridge remained in Hull until the Conference of 1828, when he was appointed to the Bingley Circuit. Here he received the following communication, honourable alike to the friends at Hull, who knew how to appreciate real excellence, and to himself as a young man in the first year of his probation :—

HULL, *October 18th, 1828.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I have much pleasure in transmitting the annexed copy of a Resolution which was very cordially as well as "unanimously" passed at our late Quarterly Meeting. My apology for not addressing you earlier is, that I intended writing you per favour of Mr. Rigg, who said at the Quarterly Meeting he expected to be in the vicinity of your residence in the course of about a fortnight. Subsequently the time of his leaving home was postponed a week or two longer, and in the end I missed the opportunity of sending a letter by him. But the fault has been mine, not Mr. Rigg's. The blame therefore, if any, must rest where it ought—on me. As Mr. Rigg, who I expect will see you, will inform you how we continue to move here, I need not trouble you with news. I hope you find yourself comfortable and at home in your new circuit. It will ever give me pleasure to see you, and to hear of your welfare. Mrs. Bowes joins with me in kind regards ; and believe me,

My dear Sir,

Yours most respectfully,

JOHN BOWES.

Rev. JOHN W. ETHERIDGE,
Bingley.

At a Quarterly Meeting of the Hull Circuit, held in the Vestry of George Yard Chapel, Sept. 29th, 1828, the following resolution was moved by Mr. George Locking, seconded by Mr. Jas. Alsop, and passed *unanimously*.

"That this meeting desires to express to the Rev. J. W. Etheridge the high sense they entertain of his ministerial conduct during the past year, and its thanks for the very

"efficient help he afforded during the illness of the Rev. J. E. Beaumont."

JOHN BOWES,
Circuit Steward.

The remaining years of Mr. Etheridge's probation were spent at Bingley, Lambeth, and Brighton, in all which Circuits he was happy and useful in his work, and was very highly esteemed by the people. His labours were richly attended with the Divine blessing, and whilst many were edified by his ministry, others were led by it to a knowledge of the truth. At the Conference of 1831, held in Bristol, under the Presidency of the Rev. George Marsden, Mr. Etheridge was received into full connexion, and solemnly ordained to the office and work of the Christian ministry. Soon after he was united in marriage to Miss Middleton, a truly devoted lady, and one who esteemed it her highest honour to share in the vicissitudes and trials of a Christian minister's life. He remained in Brighton two years longer, having as his Superintendent in 1831 the Rev. John Geden, and in 1832 the Rev. Joseph Sutcliffe, both of whom he greatly esteemed and loved.

During this period of his ministry his habits of study were diligently pursued; rich stores of knowledge were accumulated, and the sacred Scriptures read with care and diligence in the original tongues. Several of his sermons remain in

manuscript, and bear evidence that he prepared them with much pains, and sought to render them worthy of the people of his charge. He never despised a congregation. He never thought that for a small one in a country place anything that came first would do ; but always bore in mind that, whether he preached to the many or the few, he had a solemn message to deliver, and that he must deliver it in the best way he could.

While on the Lambeth Circuit Mr. Etheridge had become acquainted with John S. Elliott, Esq., of Denmark Hill, a gentleman well-known in Methodist circles, but now among the saints in light. On his removal to Brighton the young preacher's finances were not very ample ; but that kind friend, knowing that a little help was needed, sent it in such a way as to touch very tenderly his grateful heart ; and he wrote to Mr. Elliott from Worthing the following letter, dated November 11, 1831 :—

In what way shall I express my gratitude for the great kindness you have just manifested on my behalf ? Every recollection of you and of Mrs. E. has been for a long time attended by thankfulness to my God that ever He privileged me to know you ; but beneficence like *this*—the kind charity of the heart and the practical charity of the hand, of which I am the unworthy object, *fills* my breast. The Lord God, all-sufficient to reward and to save, has heard, and I trust will still hear and

answer, too, my prayer and praise for you. Oh, may He go on to bless you! May the fruit of His heavenly benediction be plenteously poured into your cup for time and eternity! May goodness and mercy follow you and yours all the days of your life, and may you dwell in the house of the Lord for ever! Your bounty, more than enough for the specific purpose you name, were it only capable of answering *that*, is most welcome, and will be of material benefit to your poor friend in the ensuing winter months. The road between Worthing and Brighton, especially the first half of it, as far as Shoreham, is so very bad that (as was the case last Saturday night), my shoes being wet through, the journey affects my head, and in a degree unfits me for efficient service, though, I bless God, my health has been generally excellent since living on this coast; and my determination is more uniform to consecrate it with all the powers of my existence to that great end for which our existence is prolonged on earth. In Brighton our sphere of labour is promising. It has already yielded fruit to the glory and praise of God. I wish the same could be said of Worthing; but we seem, with the exception of a devoted few, and they comparatively new converts, to be in a poor, dead, dull way. There must be much diligence, and burning holiness, and zeal on my part, I see. But there must be the coming of the Holy Ghost. He will come, I trust, and in His presence we shall arise and shake off our slumbers. I fear the Spirit has been continually grieved here for many years. As for the town of Worthing itself, religion seems to have a very slight hold indeed of the inhabitants. From what I have seen of *Lambeth*, the work is reviving in my old circuit. The interest I feel in the societies there excites a joyful hope that the present preachers will be honoured above

their predecessors in usefulness. May the Lord go on to be gracious, and bless them and make them an abundant blessing !

During that winter his health had suffered from exposure to cold, but he had been able to prosecute his work ; and to the same friend he wrote from Brighton, February 2nd, 1832 :—

Your truly welcome letter reached *here*, though I had not the pleasure of seeing the brother who kindly brought it to our house, being out when he called. To hear either of or from you is to me a privilege and a pleasure. Few, indeed, have been the days since my last at Denmark Hill in which I have not thought with gratitude and love of you and yours. May grace, mercy, and peace abide with you and them for ever ! I can truly say, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you ;" and remembrance is *often* (I wish *always*) accompanied by prayer. Our friend Mrs. W., it seems, had acquainted you with my indisposition at Worthing. I am happy to say, in answer to your kind inquiries on that subject, that, with the exception of an occasional *twinge* in the shoulder and side, the painful symptoms I named to her have been removed ; and have reason to hope that, by attention to diet and exercise, I shall recover and retain my wonted health. The visitation has certainly been sanctified. I think I know more of myself, and more of "Him whom to know is life eternal," than I did. I am enabled, through grace, to connect life with the purpose for which it has been given and preserved. I desire only to live but to serve and glorify God. Apart from this, the very thought of living becomes painful ; it,

indeed, gives to time all its importance, and to eternity all its glory. Oh, what a triumphant thought that you and I shall serve, and honour, and love, and enjoy God through endless being ! I feel that I can give to Him who has wrought us for this self-same thing, and unfolded these unutterable hopes, a burning heart of love. To Him who hath *loved us*, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God and the Father, to Him indeed be glory ! How infinitely desirable to love a redeeming God with all the heart, and through all the periods of life ! I was asking myself this morning why it was not the case with me. The causes which excite *any* degree of that holy and happy principle are *infinite*. If He is worthy of being loved *at all*, He is worthy of supremest love. There is no drawback in His character to limit or restrain the esteem, delight, and desire of the soul in and for Him. Oh that His work were made perfect ! Oh, could we *lose ourselves in Him*, His *depth* of mercy prove ! Very glad am I to hear of your undertaking a memoir of that celestial being, W. Lavers. The biography of such a man as that is most important ; and to exhibit such a portraiture of Christianity to the Church and to the world, for the instruction and encouragement of the one and the conviction of the other, must be in high accordance with the will of God and the mind of Christ. Christianity is so very feebly developed in the professing world in the present day, that remembrancers of its genuine character and power are ever needed. If it were only for the sake of *ministers* who may read it, I am anxious for its completion and spread. I shall ever be thankful for those memoirs you gave me of Payson and Kilpin. What lessons have I not learnt in their perusal ! "Sorrow," I trust, "after a godly sort," for my shortcomings,

more glaring in the light of their devotedness. "Yea, what indignation ; yea, what fear ; yea, what vehement desire ; yea, what zeal ; yea, what revenge !"

I have a field of usefulness among the children at Worthing and here, in which Kilpin would have gloried, *and I will glory too*. The Lord help me, and may His Spirit be with you, too, my dear brother, blessing you in your work of faith and love, and making you a blessing ! As to my being of any assistance in the ways you specify, I fear that is out of the question. Nothing will occur to my mind but what has already been suggested to yours, I am persuaded. Still, should any thought present itself which may appear likely to be of use to you, I will make a note of it, and forward it when I next write. Meanwhile, whatever our hands find to do, let us do it with our might. In the incommunicable depths of the grave, whither we go, there will be an end of opportunity. *Now* the eye and the ear of our fellow-men are open, let us present to the one and instill into the other the truth which is able to save their souls.

With most affectionate regards to Mrs. E. and family,

I am ever your truly obliged and obedient,

JOHN W. ETHERIDGE.

"I have a field of usefulness among the children," said Mr. Etheridge ; and it was a field which he loved to cultivate. He could bend himself to the capacities of the young, and took delight in addressing them and in trying to direct them to Him who said, "Suffer them to come to Me, and forbid them not." Is not this a field which

ministers, in the midst of what they deem more important duties, are too much disposed to leave to others? Yet there is a certain kind of influence which they only can exert upon the minds of children; and amply would the cultivation of this virgin soil repay them for all their toil and labour.

The following letter will be acceptable to youthful students of Hebrew; and will furnish them with valuable hints on the mode of prosecuting their task.

BRIGHTON, *May 8th*, 1833.

MY DEAR AND HONOURED FRIEND,

I have been watching for an opportunity, since my return from town, to devote sufficient time for a good long letter. Hitherto this has not occurred, and being anxious to return a speedy reply to your interesting note of last Thursday's receipt, I must content myself with a few instead of many lines.

I am truly glad to hear of Miss Elliott's desire to learn Hebrew; I can assure her that a little *patience* and perseverance in the study will lead to a rich and *increasing* reward. As to the inquiries you propose I should say—have a teacher at *first*. She will find the method of *reading* Hebrew, (I mean as it regards a fluent and bold pronunciation) to be attained with difficulty without one, whereas a half-dozen lessons or so in that department of instruction will lead her on, in a few weeks, further than she could have advanced, if left to her own unaided efforts, in as many months. I should not say that a

living instructor is necessary in any stage of the study but this. I presuppose here that she means to read Hebrew *with the points*. It is infinitely preferable, though attended with rather more labour at first. Before engaging a teacher I would acquire a familiar knowledge of the alphabet, and the vowel points, as he will be able to do nothing till that be gained. Copying the letters repeatedly is the best way of getting them by memory. I would earnestly recommend the following books. They are all that will be necessary. 1. *Lyon's* (or *Yeates's*) Grammar. The former is preferable on account of some additional assistance it affords in acquiring the elements of pronunciation by the points. 2. *The Book of Genesis* in Hebrew with an *inter-linear translation*. It gives the Hebrew in *English* letters, as well as in the original characters, which renders it very desirable to the beginner. 3. A Lexicon, but beware of Parkhurst. He gives the Hebrew roots without points, and abounds in the fancies of Hutchinsonianism, which, however amusing to a divine, will do nothing but bewilder our interesting young student. Many forms of advantage combine to render the following preferable to all others, viz., "*A Manual Lexicon*" to the Hebrew Scriptures, compiled from the larger work of Genesis by Professor Gibbs. . . . One great excellency of this book is, that it has *all* the words in the Hebrew Bible in an alphabetical order; whereas other lexicons give us only the *roots* in that order, and all the modifications of those roots in a miscellaneous way under them, a circumstance which renders it difficult even for proficients to find a word sometimes. Have you a Hebrew Bible? If not, be sure to obtain one *with points*. Montanus, which has a Latin translation interlined, is an edition which I have found very useful in facilitating the

reading of a chapter.* I can promise dear Miss Elliott inexpressible pleasure and profit in the study of God's Truth in God's own words. May she find them a sacred medium by which her soul may gain increasing communion with Him, even fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Christ Jesus. Many thanks, dear sir, for your Lavers. The Lord make that book a blessing. I request my heart-felt regards to Mrs. E., whilst I beg to remain yours affectionately,

JOHN W. ETHERIDGE.

The Rev. W. Lavers, whose Memoirs are here mentioned, was a young man who for a few years occupied a place in the Wesleyan ministry, but was compelled for want of health to retire from it just before he had finished his probation. He went to Honiton in Devonshire, where he continued to exercise his ministry for a time, and died at the age of thirty-four, Nov. 9th, 1831. Mr. Elliott's life of him is a beautiful tribute to his memory, and proves that his piety was of the most elevated character.

From another letter to Mr. Elliott, dated Worthing, July 4th, 1833, I make the following extract :—

* There are now (1871) many other works extant for the study of Hebrew, among which may be mentioned, the Grammars of Gesenius, Ewald, and Kalisch; the lexicons by Fuërst and Lee; the Hebrew Bible of Van-der-Hooght, and Bythner's Lyre of David.—T. S.

I have a hope that should you be returned from Margate before the last week in August, I shall have the privilege of spending a day and a night at Denmark Hill. The very recollections of converse and prayer beneath that roof have still, and no doubt will ever have, a vital savour to the mind of your unworthy friend. As days and months roll on, the purposes of existence become with me more simple, more centred in one object—one end. The amazing realities of eternity rise into a perpetually enlarging magnitude, and as I know more, I *feel* and *substantiate* more. Everything within and without, the present, the past, and the future, are all demonstrative ; all speak one thing—one vast, eternal, heaven-given truth, that *God is Love*. Did you ever think much on Psalm lxii. 12 ? I had a delightful season last Sabbath in preaching from it in connection with the preceding verse. Oh my dear friend, these things become more and more precious to me—they are becoming my *life*.

In the year 1833 he received his first appointment in Cornwall, a county in which he subsequently spent a considerable portion of his life, in which he at length finished his work, and in which his remains now lie, waiting the resurrection to eternal life. Truro was his first circuit in this part of the country, and here he found a warm-hearted and zealous people, amongst whom for two years his ministry was greatly blessed. In 1835 he removed to Penryn, where in October of the following year a little daughter was born to him, on which event he wrote the following exquisite

lines, which I copy from his common-place book, to which reference will again be made :—

TO OUR LITTLE DAUGHTER,

ELIZA MIDDLETON ETHERIDGE.

Child of our love! what thrilling joy
Is ours whilst on thy form we gaze!
Heaven's gift in thee shall still employ
Our lives in praise.

Child of our prayers! with hands outspread
To Him who reigns above yon skies,
Our vows, for blessings on thy head,
For ever rise.

Child of our hopes! may distant years
Behold thee virtuous, fair, and blest,
When parents both—dew'd with thy tears—
In death shall rest!

Child of our GOD! for His thou art
By Calvary's blood and rites divine;
His highest love to fill thy heart
Be early thine!

This child of their love and of their hopes became the child of their highest joy. She proved a precious loan from heaven, and, as we shall hereafter see, was to her father like an angel of light when the dark storm-cloud hung over his head.

In the same MS. volume I find a lengthened abstract of the Rev. R. Treffrey's work on the Eternal Sonship, and at the close of it the following note :—

I read this work first with its lamented author in MS. at Penryn, in 1836, and afterwards in print at Sidmouth, having finished it Feb. 10th, 1839.—J. W. E.

At Falmouth Mr. Etheridge himself entered on the pleasures and cares of authorship. The extraordinary notions of Edward Irving were then agitating some portions of the Christian Church, and having found their way into that part of Cornwall, had unsettled the minds of not a few. Mr. Etheridge, like a faithful watchman on the walls of Zion, deemed it his duty to put the trumpet to his mouth and sound an alarm, which he did by preaching a discourse on the Apostolic Ministry, founded on Ephes. iv. 7—15. Its publication was earnestly requested by many who heard it, and in an extended form it appeared in the year 1836. It is now very scarce, but a copy of it lies before me, and a very able, learned, and powerful discourse it is. As very few of my readers will have met with the volume, I am induced to give the following passages on the sufficiency of Holy Scripture to lead us into all the truth.

Had the earliest converts to Christianity the knowledge of the will of God by inspiration? So have we; yea, and more

abundantly, since *we* possess what *they* had not,—the completeness of its finished record. The vision of our faith is aided, not as in their case by momentary illapses of light, but by the steady illumination of that resplendent blaze of truth which burns in the temple of the Church from age to age till the day-break of eternity and the vision of God! *We* have the knowledge of His will, not by detached and occasional responses of the celestial oracle, but in the inheritance of the full and finished “volume of the book” which the pen of inspiration has inscribed, which miracles have sealed, which the noble army of martyrs have attested to the death, and which omniscience and omnipotence have preserved amid the combined and incessant efforts of earth and hell for its destruction—the Word of the Lord which liveth and abideth for ever,—the key of a Providence which is over all, the utterance of a love which encircles all, the Gospel of a redemption which throws open the portals of eternal life to all, and the mandate of *Laws* which have a claim upon the being of all,—laws which emanate from Deity, and therefore—

“Which not like those by feeble mortals given,
Buried in dark oblivion lie,
Or, worn by time, decay and die,
But bloom eternal in their native heaven.”

“All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” And so fully capable is it of answering these ends that either to add unto or subtract from its contents is a sin, respecting the guilt and direful penalty of

which Revelation has pronounced its most solemn warnings. So that, in the possession of the Scriptures and the agency of a converted, heaven-called, and heaven-aided ministry, the Christian Church has all the substantial advantages of the early saints, with many more which they had not. We, as they, enjoy the privilege of communion with men of inspiration whenever with wakeful spirit we approach its records, and hold converse with holy messengers from the throne of God ; no longer, it is true, "men of like passions with ourselves," but sainted beings who, in the living registry of their inspiration, as well as in their personal experience, "have put off flesh and blood," and have become immortal,—with the choir of the prophets and the fellowship of the apostles in their various and sanctified gifts,—with the eloquent Ezekiel or Isaiah, the profound and argumentative St. Paul, the instructive St. Peter, the practical St. James, or the seraph-minded St. John ! Nay, FUTURITY, which to the view of early believers was curtained in clouds and darkness, has been laid open to ours, and when we listen to the last announcements of prophecy which are given in the Apocalypse, we may hear the angel-voice which says, "The Lord God of the prophets hath sent me to show thee the things which must be hereafter, and which must shortly be done."

With these convictions of the fulness, sufficiency, and perfection of the written oracles, the consistent Christian desires no other revelation, whilst he cannot but look at all modern pretensions to them with wonder and pity. He regards such claims as having a direct tendency to bring genuine Christianity into disparagement, to advance eventually the cause of infidelity, and to accomplish the purposes of that fallen spirit

from whom they come. Having "tasted the old wine, he desireth not the new, for he saith, The old is better."

Irvingism has had its day, but these are permanent truths, and are as suitable to the present times as they were to any former period. Of novelties the Church has had far more than enough, and whoever would serve his generation well will not seek for improvements in theology, but will stand in the good old ways, knowing that whilst the systems of men will perish like the grass, the word of the Lord will endure for ever.

CHAPTER III.

The Invalid.

TO almost every Christian, whom God intends to make eminently useful, there comes a period of more than ordinary trial. He is put into the furnace, and his patience, fortitude, and faith are tested to the uttermost; when, if the ordeal is sustained, he comes forth reflecting the image of his God, and fitted for some higher service in the Church.

Mr. Etheridge had entered on the Christian ministry under somewhat favourable circumstances, and had prosecuted his work with vigour, earnestness, and zeal for several years; but occasionally he had suffered in health, which was the cause of some anxiety lest he should be unable to prosecute his much-loved work. On leaving Falmouth he was appointed to the Wednesbury Circuit, and resided at Darlaston, soon after arriving at which he wrote to Mr. Elliott as follows. Those who know "the Black-

Country," as it is called, will not be surprised at the sentiments here expressed.

This is a sad-looking neighbourhood. Science here seems to have established her Pandemonium. An immense number of large blast-furnaces illumine the darkness of the night, and frequently obscure the blessed azure of the daylight sky. Everybody is dirty, and it will require an almost Mohammedan strictness in the duties of ablution to prevent our becoming as smoke-dried as any of them. Mrs. Etheridge was quite depressed at first, but she possesses some degree of facility in accommodating herself to present circumstances, which will enable her, I hope, to recover her usual equanimity before many days are gone. Our little daughter, praise the Lord, has sustained the journey, and the transition of air, quite safely. And now let me have but health, and my daily delight (as it hitherto has been) shall be to glorify my God in the work of the Gospel of His Son. I want a closer union with the Redeemer, that I may be "strong in the grace which is in Him," and which, without such an union, is altogether impossible. May we all know the blessedness of the life which is by the faith that is in Him, and may you and I so labour as that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted by Him. I desire my most respectful regards to dear Mrs. and Miss E., together with as many of the young people as may be with you, in which also my dear wife sincerely unites; and hoping for the pleasure of a letter from you at no distant day,

I remain, yours truly and affectionately,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

Among the "Generalia" of this date are several lyrics, bearing his initials, and a few translations of German hymns. The following lines appear in his handwriting, but are signed by his amiable wife, with this note : "Composed by my husband at Darlaston, Oct. 31st, 1837."

THE COLLECT FOR THE COMMUNION SERVICE.

O God enthroned in light of light,
 Before Thy all-exploring sight
 The heart's deep secrets lie reveal'd,
 Though from all creatures' gaze conceal'd.
 Cleanse now our hearts, Thy power alone,
 To whom their mystic spirings are known,
 Can reach, and by its wondrous grace
 Their hated stains of sin efface.
 O send Thy Spirit forth, whose fire
 Celestial shall our souls inspire,
 Their death-struck energies upraise
 To perfect love and worthiest praise.

I can only find room for two others at present, which, I think, indicate that Mr. Etheridge would have been no mean poet had he cultivated the gift which he possessed.

THE DAY BEFORE EASTER.

"Crucified, dead, and buried."—*Apostles' Creed.*

The hurricane of wrath is past—and still'd
 His horror-troubled soul. In the lone tomb
 He rests in death, seal'd with our guilt's own doom.

That arm, erewhile, with strength almighty fill'd,
For miracles of grace,—the feet that trod
The pavement of the storm-resounding deep,
And the imperial countenance of God,
Cold, adamant, lie in mortal sleep !
Hush'd be all worlds ! the thundering choirs above
Of cherubim are mute, while deepening fears
Benumb the cruel energies of hell ;
And suffering nature breathes from their dread spell ;
Stern justice rests ;—smiles radiantly through tears
Of joy and sympathy, triumphant Love.

Rest on, thou humbled One ; but oh ! 'tis Thine,
To-morrow to awake in life divine.

FOR EASTER SUNDAY.

“ He is risen.”

The jubilee of earth is come,
The great redeeming task is done,
The everlasting triumph won,
For He is risen.

Emblems and mystic sights of old,
Prophetic words which this foretold,
Now their complete fulfilment hold,
For He is risen.

Perish and pass away thou wilt,
Thron'd spirit of our hell-born guilt,
He who for us His blood once spilt
This day is risen.

Lo ! the veil'd heavens now rent appear,
Mercy in smiles dispels our fear,
And bids us to her shrine draw near,
Through Jesus risen.

With seraph-hymns yon domes resound ;
Earth ! waft them to thy utmost bound,
Let universal praise redound,
To Jesus risen.

And thou, my soul, no more delay,—
The voice celestial now obey,
And plume thy wing to soar away
To Jesus risen.

What though for me shall yawn the grave,
My Saviour who the ransom gave,
Will from its dark recesses save,
As He is risen.

To raise Thy trusting ones is Thine,
I see it pledged in truth divine,
And immortality is mine,
For Thou art risen.

At Darlaston his health was again in a very precarious state ; and, in answer to some kind inquiries respecting it, addressed to him by Miss Elliott, he wrote, saying that a cold which he took about the beginning of December, 1837, had made him “a close prisoner at home.” He then observes : “How impressive, my dear friend, is the present

season ! (Jan. 1, 1838.) The years of time as they elapse bring nearer and nearer the arrival of periods which are fraught with unutterable interest to ourselves as individuals, and to the race of which we form a part. Who, as another of these large divisions of our life disappears for ever in the abyss, is not reminded of his own relation at once to mortality and to immortality ? The end of life is nearer, and the departure of another year gives a yet more sensitive power to the memento which it uttered as it died,—that He, to whom belong the issues of death, will bring us to the grave ! whilst in relation to the world at large the revolutions of time are bearing it forward towards those undeveloped destinies for which it was created and redeemed. The final struggle is nearer between Christianity and the tyranny of hell as exercised hitherto on earth ; and nearer too are the millennial triumphs of the Church, and the chorus of heaven and earth around the throne of the Redeemer ! And then, the *end* of time, the final scene, the day of the risen dead and their judgment at the great white throne,—the coronation day of the just made perfect, and the perdition of ungodly men—are all surely, and to the eye of expectant faith, visibly, and to every man inevitably nearer. Ah ! now it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is *our salvation* nearer than when we first believed."

His affliction continued, and to the same friend he wrote on the 5th of March, 1838, in the spirit of holy resignation to the will of God, as follows :—

I am by no means ignorant how easily persons with this class of diseases flatter themselves with expectations of returning health which are never realized ; and I *know*, and I am endeavouring to act upon the conviction, that my highest wisdom is to be *ready* for the great transition. Blessed be God, my affliction is so far sanctified that I view this world, and the next one, as much as is known of it, in the sober light of truth. The first, except as identified with its present and prospective interests in the blessings of the Gospel of Christ, has lost every charm for me ; and the second becomes, I can truly say, more and more attractive. “There is my home, my portion fair.” With repentant self-abhorrence and earnest desire, with humble but unwavering and determined confidence, I am led daily to draw NEAR to Christ, my redeeming God ; and, endeavouring to live hourly in the spirit of faith and prayer, I feel a *peaceful* and *filial* acquiescence in the Divine will, a growing assurance of sharing in the blessings of the new Covenant, here and for ever ; and an habitual determination to live for God alone. I sometimes think that He has yet work for me to do on earth, and long to accomplish it ; but it is my felicity to know that should He have determined otherwise, the mere circumstance of dissolution will not hinder me from serving and glorifying Him *elsewhere*. I am His, and I know that I shall yet praise Him, either in His holy Church upon earth, or in the sublime abodes of the just made perfect. Now it is, my dear friend, that I feel

the increasing preciousness of the Gospel, and a holy satisfaction that the things which, for fourteen years, I have been enabled to preach to others are the *truth* of God. Frequently I penitently acknowledge, with regard to *motive* and *manner*, the ministry which I exercised was debased with much alloy, but the substance of it was truth ; nor, should I ever be permitted to preach again, is there anything on the great subject of a sinner's salvation which upon a solemn review I could alter for the better, unless it were that I should be more in earnest in pressing repentance upon the *ungodly*, a full, free, and present justification upon the penitent, and the great salvation of God upon all believers. On looking over what has been written, I feel something of disgust with myself for the egotism which pervades it. My only apology is, the wish you expressed to know particularly my present state.

Believe me, in the everlasting bonds of friendship and esteem in Christ Jesus, to be yours,

J. W. E.

To be laid aside from the active duties of the ministry is, to a comparatively young man who really loves his work, a great trial. And Mr. Etheridge *loved his work*. He was a severe student, and was partial to his library and his books ; but to preach the Gospel was his chief delight, and once when by a throat affection he was for several years almost deprived of the privilege, he sorrowed deeply, whilst he bowed in submission to the Divine command, and meekly said, "Father, Thy will be done." For three years

his name stands connected in the Minutes of Conference with Axminster, in the Exeter district; but he resided in different parts of the south-west of England,—an itinerant in search of health. Meanwhile he prosecuted his studies, and projected several works, which at a later period were presented to the world. He was partial to the Church of England, and when residing at Sidmouth, near Budleigh-Salterton, went sometimes to the parish church, where on one occasion he heard a lecture by the curate of Sidmouth, on the doctrine of the apostolic succession. He was deeply grieved by the sentiments advanced, and was induced, from a sense of duty, to publish a letter, addressed to the curate, in which he controverted most powerfully the dogma in question. The tract is a small one, but it proves undeniably that “the grand external characteristics of a genuine Apostolic Church is,” not in its possession of a ministry which has descended from the apostles through an unbroken line of bishops; but “in its conformity in doctrine, sacraments, and discipline, to the Scriptures of revealed truth.” Alas! for the Church of England, that many within her pale continue to hold and to teach a dogma so contrary to reason, to Scripture, and to historic fact; and to deny, in consequence, the validity of the Presbyterian ordinations of the Churches of Scotland, of the Dissenting and Methodist

churches of Great Britain and America, and of the Lutheran and other churches on the continent of Europe. But such is the fact, and here lies the root of the intolerance and the bigotry by which a section of it is characterized in the present day.

On a kindred topic Mr. Etheridge wrote another tract, entitled, "Second Baptisms Unwarrantable." The curate of Budleigh-Salterton had induced several young people, who had been baptized by Wesleyan ministers, to receive the rite again from his hands, on the ground that it had not previously been duly administered. Mr. Etheridge was again indignant, and proves in the letter that the conduct of the curate was both illegal and unscriptural, and offered to discuss the whole question publicly with the curate, and to establish his theses opposite to the doctrines which he held and preached. It does not appear that the challenge was accepted.

The following letter, though long, is too precious to be curtailed. It was addressed to Miss Elliott; and contains sentiments which will meet with a response in the breast of many a follower of Christ :—

SIDMOUTH, *October 8th*, 1838.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your welcome letter would have reached me sooner had Mr. Shepherd been one of the children of this world,

whose wisdom would have suggested the propriety of posting it for me at once rather than wait the event of some friend's coming here from Axminster. Gladly, however, did I at length receive it, and the more so as I felt that my long silence had rendered me additionally undeserving of it. Still that silence was not a willing one, but observed by constraint, as I have been throughout the summer in complete uncertainty of the place of your residence, and had determined to wait till about the latter end of this month before addressing a letter to you at Denmark Hill. We left Darlaston about the middle of June, resting for the night successively at Cheltenham, Bristol, and Exeter, and arrived here on the evening of the fourth day. At Bristol I had the pleasure of spending the evening with Mr. H. Davies, who mentioned the probability of your visiting Clifton shortly after. This, I presume, did not take place. As I dislike both the expense and the inconveniences of lodging-houses, one of my first pursuits, after a few days' rest here, was to look for a suitable little cottage for our more permanent residence. The Lord's gracious providence in this, as in all other things, was over us for good, so that in the fifth week of our coming to Sidmouth we were enabled to take possession of one which I had both taken and furnished by that term. I don't know whether you were ever in this part of Devon. Sidmouth is one of the most delightful places in the county. The town is small, exceedingly clean and rustic, and yet furnished with shops which afford not only the ordinaries but even the luxuries of life. It is well sheltered on the north-east and west by well-cultivated and wooded hills, and commands from a romantic coast a fine view of the Channel. Our house is half a mile from the town, and stands in what is called the Vale, and a

beautiful one it is, with a temperature in winter, as I am informed, of five degrees greater warmth than that of London. Methodism here is yet but in its childhood. There is a neat little chapel, which was opened about eighteen months ago, and a small society. But the preachers live at a great distance, Axminster being sixteen miles from hence, and the circuit so wide as to allow of their being here but very seldom. The cause wants an active pastor, and such an one living here would be instrumental of great good, as the people press to the chapel in crowds, and hear the Word with solemn and hopeful attention. I cannot express the agony of desire which I feel sometimes to address them. The Word of the Lord seems indeed like fire in my bones, and it requires no small effort to restrain myself and to cry for grace to say, in quietness and resignation of soul, "Thy will be done!" Nevertheless, I am living in what I trust is not an unreasonable hope that the Lord will yet open my lips, that my mouth may show forth His praise. I am certainly better than when at Darlaston, the smoke of which kept up a perpetual irritation, and gave that chronic character to the malady which I don't think it would otherwise have assumed. But, though the almost constant inflammation of the throat has in a great measure subsided, I am left in a very delicate state, so as to be still incapable of any vocal exertion beyond occasional subdued conversation, and sometimes a prayer at our morning and evening family worship. There are two places in this neighbourhood which are hallowed by their association with the name of William Lavers. Ottery St. Mary's is seven miles from Sidmouth, and Honiton nine miles; at the latter the remains of that saint of God rest in peace. His memory, I can assure you, is still cherished with

holy love by the pious in those parts, and his very name is as a sacred odour poured forth. The present Sir John Kennaway, though I believe a good man, does not inherit his father's love of Wesleyan Methodism, and the assistance which (it is said in execution of the late baronet's will) he affords to its existence in Ottery is by no means given *con amore*. The Miss Kennaways have been married for some time. Sir John has presided at two public meetings in Sidmouth lately, and is considered as one of the leading men in the episcopal circles of this county. When *will* the time come when the love of Christ shall have so far surmounted the prejudices of the heart as to bring together into one all in whom it really dwells?

Tuesday, 9th.

I have just been reading again that part of your last which relates to your personal experience. You are right, and the good part which you have chosen shall not be taken away from you. My soul is solemnized, yea, overwhelmed, when I contemplate the riches of the grace which privileges and enables us to say, "Thou art my portion, O Lord!" Yet a little while, even at the farthest, and the people of God shall know the exceeding glory of such an inheritance. We have the unutterable hope of immortality; we have the earnest of the Spirit, the sure and certain pledge that God hath wrought us for this self-same thing. Comparatively small, as feeble, as may be our piety in its present state, its very existence proves the past and present mercy of God to us, and guarantees our brightest anticipations if we be but faithful unto the end. This, however, necessarily involves a diligent progression. We must follow on, and every fresh acquisition in the knowledge and love of the

Triune Deity will bring an increase of moral strength and substantial peace. The service of our Lord has a present reward. The holy have a right to be happy. "He bids them now the land possess, and on His milk and honey feed." Oh, let us be of their number. A covenant God speaks to *us* in His Word ; let us hear and believe, and it shall evermore be imputed to us for righteousness ; and let us add to our faithful watchfulness, praying always with all prayer. I would earnestly advise you to be systematical in this great duty ; I mean systematical as to times and seasons. For a long time I have found an inestimable advantage in observing certain hours of the day at which, with or without any other impulse than that arising from previous determination, I have bowed myself at the throne of grace. Most heartily can I recommend this practice, and shall be happy to say more upon it on another opportunity. Meanwhile, may the Lord bless you, and keep you, and make His face to shine upon you, and give you peace !

With my cordial regards to your dear parents and brothers, believe me to be,

Ever your affectionate friend,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

Mr. Etheridge was himself a man of prayer. Not only did he observe certain hours in the day for its exercise, but he lived in the spirit of it at all times. In company, in the public streets, and in his private and solitary walks, he often lifted up his heart to God, and breathed out some petition for himself or others. Mrs. Ellis observes : "I well remember

walking with him one day, when a ragged fierce-looking man asked charity, coming so near as to cause me to shrink from the contact. On leaving him Dr. E. said, 'Did you pray for that man?' My answer was in the negative. 'I did,' he said, 'as soon as I saw him. I try never to pass any miserable object in my walks without lifting up my heart to God to have pity upon him, and like to think that if such never had a prayer offered up for them before, they have had one to-day.' " This incident occurred at a somewhat later period of his life; but it had been his practice then to pray for such persons for many years; and who can tell how many blessings rested on them in answer to his importunate requests?

To the same lady he again wrote on her contemplated marriage with Mr. Ellis, a son of the late Sir W. Ellis; and, referring to his remarks in the above letter, said :—

In a sentence on the subject of prayer in the last letter but one which I had the happiness of receiving from you, I have reason to suspect that something on that matter which I had said in a former communication was not expressed with sufficient clearness. I had intimated the advantages of observing stated times *for* prayer, which you appear to have understood as a recommendation of a continuing in the exercise of prayer *for a stated period*. This I never intended to advise, as it cannot at all times be practicable, and as it militates to my mind against

the proper idea of prayer. What I earnestly recommend is, the consecration of certain points of time in the twenty-four hours, on the return of which the soul shall be reminded of its duty and privilege, and to be found for a shorter or longer period, as the case may be, at the throne of grace. Such was the practice of the ancient Christians, and, in later days, of the original Methodists, and of its many benefits I have been assured by long experience.

Yes ; stated periods of each day should undoubtedly be set apart by all who would maintain the spirit of prayer, and have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. But the length of such periods must be determined by circumstances, and by the condition of the suppliant at the time. In some instances they may be comparatively brief ; in others greatly protracted : but wilfully to neglect the appointed time will necessarily be attended with loss ; carefully to attend to it, will keep the soul in that habitual frame of devotion which is essential to its highest weal.

To the same excellent lady, now Mrs. Ellis, he addressed the following letters, which, full as they are of golden words, I give without any abridgment.

IVY COTTAGE, near SIDMOUTH.

December 12th, 1839.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I last evening received your truly kind and welcome letter. It was a favour which was more than I felt myself

worthy of, or had dared to expect, under my frequent convictions of the *apparently* strange and unduteous silence I had observed at a period so eventful to you as the last half-year. Permit me to explain that the cause was an untoward ignorance of the time of your marriage, occasioned by a failure in our receipt of the *Watchman* (to which you had previously referred us for the then future information) for several weeks about the middle of June. And, in this state of uncertainty, the season passed away in which I should have delighted to give expression, by the pen, for your own eye, to those ardent wishes and hopes for the felicity of your wedded life, which, since attaining certain knowledge of your entrance upon it, I had felt and still feel from the inmost soul. But suffer me to trust that even now my congratulations shall not be deemed too late ; and to assure you, by the grace of God, my prayer and supplication shall ascend that your domestic lot may be one sheltered from every evil by almighty wings, and cheered by every blessing that can render a long life tranquil and holy, or the close of it triumphant. It is your unspeakable mercy to be privileged to expect this, and to identify such an expectation with a sense of duty. For such is the blessedness of those whose God is the Lord. And as you and Mr. Ellis are united not only by outward "rites divine," but also by true and holy principle, and have laid the foundations of your future history "on a rock," in the filial fear, love, and service of a covenant God, I firmly believe that this blessedness *will* be yours ; that goodness and mercy shall follow you all the days of your lives, and that you shall both dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. Amen. With a freshness of sincerity, too, such as I felt at the time, though thus late in expressing it, and by one of those (alas ! not unfrequent) associations of events in the

present state which call for mingled felicitations and condolences, would I advert to the decease of the late Sir William Ellis.* Though I never had the honour of being known to him personally, I had been in the habit, in common with thousands, of regarding him, as a public character, with uniform admiration ; while the occasional allusions to his private worth, which for years I have heard from the lips of those who were more privileged than myself in the enjoyment of his acquaintance, were such as always enhanced those feelings into a kind of personal respect and esteem, very nearly allied to friendship : for it is possible, as I know from experience, to cherish a sentiment of friendship for the great and the good whom we have never seen, or expect to see, by the eye of the flesh. This departure to a more congenial world must have been to the immediate circle which he left, as when a light, serene and brilliant, becomes extinguished. The last few months to yourself have been fraught with a chequered experience. Your bridal garment was interleaved with funeral leaves, and “in the garden there was a sepulchre!” After this manner it happens to us all—I was going to say, too often—but not so ; for in all these marked dispensations of a Providence infinitely wise and paternal in its love, “whatever is, is right.” Under His unerring control, all things work together, and for good to those who love Him. May you and yours, and I and mine, be of those who love Him much. My health has somewhat of late improved. I have

* Sir W. Ellis was long celebrated for his treatment of lunatics in the Hanwell Asylum. He was an eminently Christian man, and died on the 24th Oct., 1839. See a beautiful memoir of him entitled “Our Doctor.” Seeley, etc.

preached once in the Independent chapel in Sidmouth, and several times in our own; but on each occasion was able to take the sermon only, the other parts of the service were performed by another. I have lately begun to indulge in a hope of being able at no distant period to resume my beloved employment in the full work of the ministry. We have removed lately from our first residence, and now have a much better one in a beautifully secluded cottage, though at a rather greater distance from the town. Farewell in all things.

Ever your truly affectionate friend,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

SIDMOUTH, *March 3rd, 1840.*

Your welfare, my dear friend, with that of Mr. Ellis, will ever be a subject of joy to me, both in time and eternity. It gave me real pleasure to hear of it in your last. I assure you I am grateful for the kind remembrance of me which induced you to write, and I do trust that I shall have the happiness through the whole of my life to be numbered with your correspondents, though of all of them the most unworthy. May grace and peace be multiplied to you both, from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I am delighted to find that you are both engaged in the service of God. May you find it perfect freedom, and obtain the gracious reward which is annexed to its fulfilment,—the crown of righteousness. Several years ago I met, in Vaughan's "Christian Warfare," with a sentiment on this subject which I have never forgotten. He says that pride is one of the hindrances to the calls of God's

service among our fellow-creatures, and, dilating on this topic, he observes that to *do good it is usually necessary that we should stoop* rather than rise; the circle of usefulness usually consisting of a number of things which people in the world are in the habit of regarding as insignificant and contemptible. Hence many intellectual and educated professing Christians pass life away without attempting to serve God in their day, though all the while regarding their ability to do good as a talent for which they cannot give an account. They read, hear, and talk, but they shrink from exertion. They expect to receive from the Redeemer a title to heaven, but decline doing anything for His cause on earth. Great must be the guilt of this, from which it will be unspeakable mercy to be saved. You touch, in your last, upon the subject of motives; and ask whether you are "right in thinking that love to God should be the spring of every action?" Undoubtedly; love to Him should be the all-pervading soul of our whole agency, without which it will be but a series—a sort of funeral procession—of "dead works." But you seem to doubt whether that "sense of duty," from which you are often constrained to act, be consistent with this blessed principle. I believe that they are in perfect harmony; that is to say, in a regenerate mind. For the foundation of duty is the will of God as made known in His word and applied to the conscience of His children by the Holy Spirit. To perform an action therefore from a sense of duty is to do it from a regard to the divine will, which the Bible affirms to be one of the surest manifestations of a right state of heart. God's law, the rule of our duty, is a perfect index of His will, as the latter is of His character and nature. To act from a sense of duty is, therefore, to act in reference to all that is holy, just, and good. Nay, a

course of such obedience, under the guiding, hallowing influence of the Holy Spirit, and the cheering sense of divine favour, which causes the soul to delight itself in God, and to run in the way of His commandments, is a progression towards an increasing resemblance to Himself. "This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments ;" "If ye love me, keep My commandments ;" words that plainly intimate that there can be no love to God where there is no sense of duty, and no acting in compliance with its dictates. I think it is Dr. Wardlaw who says, "He who keeps the commandments loves God in *action*, as he who loves God keeps the commandments in *principle*," and they are inseparable.

I should not speak exactly in this way to one who is seeking pardon, as it would put such a person on a wrong pursuit of the means of obtaining it, and moreover exhibit a standard of conduct to which our unrenewed nature is incapable of attaining (see Romans vii.) ; but on those who know the justifying grace of God, and are looking for His mercy unto eternal life itself, it is incumbent to add to our faith those solid and practical virtues in which our lives become useful, our light shines forth, and our Father in heaven is glorified.

And so far good ; but we must not conceal from ourselves the fact, that it is possible to set about a known duty not so much from a *sense of duty* as from a desire to avoid the reproaches of an uneasy conscience. The difference between the two motives is obvious. To act from a sense of duty is to do so from a regard to the will of God, and argues the existence of a godly state of heart ; but to act from apprehension of eternal punishment, consequent on neglect, is to obey an inducement which originates in selfishness. In this last sentence I discern the

handwriting of condemnation against my own conduct in many an instance,—the recollection, nay, the too frequent occurrence of which cries for deep abasement and repentance before God. Let us try to do better, aiming at that nobler state so near to us by evangelical privilege, in which more entirely renewed we should love the Lord our God with all our mind, heart, soul, and strength, and our neighbours as ourselves. In this happy state obedience is the constant, spontaneous, and, I may say, natural habit of a life which becomes more and more holy and acceptable unto God. Such is the blessedness in store for those who follow on to know the Lord.

May every blessing of the New Covenant be the portion of you and yours. My dear wife, whose health is at present in a very delicate state, unites with me in cordial remembrance. Our daughter has been very ill, but is now doing well again. She is with me in the little study in which I am writing, and asks this moment whether I am writing to Mrs. Ellis, and whether I have given her love to you. For myself, I am still obliged to live almost the life of a recluse. I hope the next summer will contribute to health and strength, for I long to be at work again. I printed a little thing some months since on apostolical succession. It is a sixpenny tract, with the title of "The Controverted Question of Apostolical Succession of no Practical Importance to the Church of England ; in a letter to the Rev. S. Lee, Curate of Sidmouth." I think there are some copies of it at Hamilton and Adams', Paternoster Row. Since writing it I have been induced to do more on the same view of the subject, and have perpetrated no less than twelve chapters, comprising about 230 pages. The work is designed as a kind of peace-offering—a call to union among the better sort of

Dissenters and the Evangelical Church party. I want some judicious friend now to read it for me, before I venture on the labour of transcribing. My best regards, please, at Denmark Hill ; and may I also ask you to present our joint love to Mr. H. Davies when you see him.

Ever, my dear friend, yours most truly,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

But now came one of the severest trials of Mr. Etheridge's life, the death of his beloved and amiable wife. To her he was most devotedly attached, and the more so as she took the deepest interest in his studies, and sympathized with him in his literary tasks. She died in Christ, and he knew that she had entered into rest ; but the stroke was a heavy one, and he found his consolation only in the grace of God, which enabled him to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord !"

To his youngest sister, Mrs. Bull, he wrote the following very touching letter :—

SIDMOUTH, *May 19th, 1840.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

I have to thank you heartily for your kind and sympathizing letter, which was a word in season. I assure you my affliction has been great, and my heart is still bleeding. The whole seems like a dark dreadful dream, from which I only awake at times to the acutest anguish. But, blessed be God ! He supports me under it, and is, I trust, causing it to be sancti-

fied to my eternal good. Should my own infirmities lead to a not distant grave, I can truly say that the grave has lost, even by the late dispensation, much of its triumph; yea, through the mercy of our God, all its triumph, and death the venom of his sting. I desire to live for the child's sake whom He has preserved to me; I mean my Eliza. The infant, you are aware, did not see the light. . . . Next I wish that, existing and acting entirely for His glory, I may, in my very limited and humble sphere, be made serviceable in the cause of Christ, whether by writing or conversation. Short of these objects, I cannot say that life has any charms for me. I should desire to depart and be with Christ and His saved ones, with some of whom it will be your happiness and mine to spend a blessed eternity,

I am your affectionate brother,

J. W. E.

On this melancholy event he also wrote to Mrs. Ellis a letter, full of thought and feeling, the greater part of which I cannot but insert:—

IVY COTTAGE, *July 23rd, 1840.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The great pleasure with which I saw your handwriting this morning at the post-office was a good deal alloyed by shame and regret that I had so long neglected to fulfil my constant intention of answering the consolatory letter it was my privilege and comfort to receive from you so many weeks ago. The truth is, there is a certain kind of anguish in writing on the subject which called forth your kind sympathy that I have continually felt myself to shrink from, though the subject itself is always

present to my mind ; and daily, too, have principles and meditations such as those you then suggested ministered some measure of solace to my poor troubled and bleeding heart. I know, too, that this apparent affliction is designed for my good ; and even now, comparing myself with my state in months that are past, I feel that it is working the peaceable fruits of righteousness. With the ties that bound me to earth so far loosened, and with a more solemn, deep, and practical feeling of my relation to interests and beings invisible and deathless, my soul is braced and strengthened to pursue the course allotted me with greater simplicity of motive and a firmer decision. Deeply convinced that all my powers should be devoted to the service of the Redeemer, and having no expectation of happiness apart from that service, I feel with every degree of returning health an unspeakable desire to be so occupied during my remaining days as that my life may be rendered really and eternally useful. Indeed, in these purposes I find my only refuge from consuming grief. I trust that grace will be given me to employ each successive period of time in their accomplishment. Nor is it, I hope, an unworthy, though secondary, motive to the execution of these resolves that in this way only I can fill up my days with approval and satisfaction to that sweet spirit who is gone before me, but who I would fain believe is still, in some unknown manner, cognizant of my life and history. Thus, then, let me strive to glorify that God to whom she now emphatically *lives*, so as at the last I may see her again with joy. This of itself, independent of higher considerations, would be a rich and gracious and undeserved felicity, the hope of which will relieve the gloom that would otherwise be threatening me, and enable me to look forward with ever-increasing interest to the hour

“ When that illustrious morn shall break
 The dawn of heavenly day,
 And I shall hear her spirit speak,
 ‘ My husband, come away.’ ”

Meanwhile I adore the mercy that has spared me my lovely child, whom be it my hourly business to train for the service of the Lord here, and for His presence in heaven. She is now in her seventh year, and an interesting creature she is. I wish to live for her sake ; but I humbly believe the Lord will never leave either her or me in life or death. Here am I writing again about myself, a practice which I more and more abhor, but which I am obliged to have recourse to at the present juncture in answer to your own kind inquiries.

* * * * *

I am yours, etc.,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

The sentiments here expressed are, I believe, entertained by many. “ We are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses,” says the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews ; and the witnesses he refers to are the saints who have passed away. Are they, then, *witnesses of us* ? and are they “ cognizant of our life and history ? ” To a certain extent they may be ; for they are said to be “ like unto the angels,” who, we know, are “ worshipping spirits, sent forth to minister for them who are heirs of salvation.” May not they, then, be sent forth on such errands ? and may not they be often nearer to us than we generally suppose ?

The *possibility* of this none will deny ; and even this should encourage us in our Christian course, and should stimulate us to run "with patience the race which is set before us, looking unto Jesus."

Time rolled on, and, as we shall see, brought with it many changes ; but the memory of his beloved wife was cherished to the last ; and twenty years after her decease he dedicated to her, as if she were still with him, his work on the Targums, in the following beautiful words :—

Patronæ meæ et uxori, ELIZÆ, pulchræ, piæ, semper carissimæ. Comploratæ veruntamen non sine spe constanti et certa ; evanesce, tantum donec aspiret dies, et diffulgiat umbræ.*

Mr. Etheridge now paid a visit to his native isle, where, for the sake of his daughter's health, he remained for some weeks. The following is an extract from a letter to Mrs. Ellis :—

NEWPORT, I. W., Nov. 1, 1840.

DEAR MRS. ELLIS,

It was very kind of you to write to me from Suffolk. Every letter I receive from you conveys consolation and encouragement to one who feels the need of both. May the Lord reward you, as I am sure He will ; for though the object of the

* "To my guardian angel and wife, Eliza; beautiful, pious, and ever most beloved. Bewailed, but not without sure and certain hope ; short-lived, but only till the day dawn, and the shadows flee away."

act may be very unworthy, yet the work itself is a good one, and will in no wise lose its recompense. I hope you and dear Mr. Ellis have returned to town in health and welfare, and that you both will enjoy a happy and holy winter. The swift revolution of our months and years has for some time ceased with me to be a subject of regret, except as contrasted with the slowness of one's progress in fulfilling the purposes for which life is spared, and gaining a meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light; otherwise the more rapid the transit the better, for through the riches of divine grace I am permitted to rejoice in the hope of everlasting life. I trust it will be our happiness to possess the full assurance of this hope even to the end, holding fast the certitude of our justification, cultivating the privileges, and attaining the fruition of the blessings to which it entitles us.

A few days later he wrote again in reply to a kind offer of Mrs. Ellis to take his daughter for a few weeks, with the hope that she would be benefited by the change. If ever the deep affection of a father's heart for an only child was tenderly expressed, it is in the following extract:—

NEWPORT, I. W., *Nov. 9th, 1840.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I would have replied to yours received on Saturday at once, had I been aware that a post left the island for town on that day. I am deeply affected by your kindness. I am, and desire to be still more thoroughly imbued with everlasting grati-

tude to the author of all grace, and to you, His servant, for this and every preceding expression of your friendship; and although it does not appear expedient to me to adopt the course you point out, yet I am persuaded that this will be the abiding temper of my soul towards one who has shown such a real interest in the welfare of myself and my child. But let me solicit your attention to the causes of my hesitating to part with her at present, even for the next-to-maternal care of our ever-valued Mrs. Wilkinson. My motive in resolving to spend the next five or six months here rather than in Oxon was not merely to economise, (which the present position of my affairs will render absolutely necessary for twelve months to come), nor merely on account of personal health, for had I been alone there I could of course have lived as much within doors as I pleased; but it was primarily for her sake that I felt it proper to seek as southern an air as could, under present circumstances, be attainable, because exercise every day in the open air, if possible, I know to be necessary to her health, and that will be more probably had here than either in Oxford or London, the temperature being decidedly warmer. Next, I am thankful to say, our residence has already proved salubrious to us both—I will not speak of myself, though I may just say that my cough is gone, and I am now I hope as comparatively well as when leaving Devon in September; but Eliza, too, is evidently improved; her colour is better; she is free from every kind of ailment, her appetite is good, and she is not so thin as when she came here. Indeed I have never known her better, scarcely so well. When Mrs. Nash called she was indeed looking poorly, but it was in part owing, I suppose, to the fatigue of the journey and the feeling produced by a rapid change of air.

A little later he said, in another letter to Mrs. Ellis :—

You ask me to write a letter full of myself ! Verily, a delectable theme, the very nature of which, even were time less pressing than it is at this moment, would render it a requirement of conscience with me to select a sheet of note-paper rather than one of the ordinary dimensions. I remember at a class-meeting once a young lady, when asked the usual question of how she felt the state of her mind ? returning for an answer, that she did not know ! It struck me there was much of wisdom as well as guilelessness in the reply. Oh, how little we know of ourselves ! However, the tangible and unmistakable facts of my own case are as follows : through the divine mercy, my own health is certainly no worse, even for this rigorous weather—nay, I believe it is improving ; and that of my dear little girl is graciously preserved from day to day, though we have been surrounded on all sides by an epidemic which has haunted the Isle of Wight for several months. (It has caused me no small anxiety this last month, and could I have foreseen it I should never have thought of wintering here ; nor can I rationally think of taking her away till the severity of the season is somewhat passed.) When I came here the plan of procedure for the term of my sojourn in Newport embraced such topics as these : To continue to work out my own salvation ; take care of the education of my child, her mind and body ; preach as often as circumstances would admit ; endeavour to set a Christian example, in spirit, word, and work, before such of my relatives as reside here, and with whom I should be likely to be brought into frequent intercourse ; to lead them nearer to God, and do them all the good, both in spirituals and temporals, in my power ; keep

up acquaintance with Hebrew and Syriac ; cultivate a more accurate knowledge of Greek and Latin, in many departments of which I have been wanting ; theological reading, especially on the subject of the Sacraments, as I have some doubts whether my views of them have not been in past years too low and unworthy ; and to endeavour to accomplish a little work for the service of the young. But hitherto I have fallen sadly short of these points. I find that the uninterrupted retirement enjoyed at Sidmouth does not exist here, and the numerous calls to which I am liable consume no small portion of my days and weeks.

This topic, his daughter's health, was ever on his mind, and with the utmost solicitude he watched every sign of improvement which he fancied he could see. To the same lady he again wrote, Feb. 1, 1841 :—

I am happy, my dear friend, to be able to say, in reply to your very kind inquiry after my little girl's health, that she is now, I hope, as well as before the illness which had seized her on the very morning I received Mrs. Elliot's letter. Nay, I hope she is all the better for it, as for some time previous I had been uneasy on account of one or two bad symptoms, which have now disappeared. Her medical attendant has, nevertheless, felt it his duty to give me an intimation that great care will be necessary in training her up. He asked whether her mamma did not die of some pulmonary affection, and said, in answer to my reply in the affirmative, that he discerned a predisposition that way in Eliza, which would require all the attention I could give her to rescue her constitution from its tendencies. I need not draw

the veil upon the feelings with which I listened to admonitions of this kind. My great refuge is in such truths as 2 Cor. iv. 10. At the same time I cannot be sufficiently thankful for her present welfare, and the reasons I have to believe that delicacy of constitution is the worst of her state. Since writing to you last we have removed from our first lodgings, the principal cause of which was an accident occurring to the wall of the house in the thaw, when the snow water found its way into our bedroom, at a time also when such an intrusion was the least welcome. The change, however, has been in all respects for the best, as here we have much better apartments, and suitable attendance. I am indebted to your dear brother for two short but valued letters, which nothing but the almost incessant course of occupation in which, till very recently, I have had to consume my time, has prevented my answering. Now I shall be able to do it. I had a call a little while ago from Mr. Lessey, and was glad to find he was able to cherish a reasonable expectation of recovery to a good measure of health. I trust that, though he may never be again physically the man he once was, he is yet destined to unfold the riches of Christ to tens of thousands, though it will be well for him to adhere to the advice he gave me as to my own humble course in futurity, to beware of beginning too soon. Were you not much struck by the melancholy end of poor Bumby's career? He wrote in my wife's album, at Birmingham, the language of St. Paul in Acts xx. 22, substituting New Zealand for Jerusalem. Poor fellow, he was one of my earliest friends in the ministry, and very pleasant are the memories of our intercourse in past years. I always doubted the propriety of his leaving England, where the brilliancy of his imagination, his ardent piety, blameless life, and earnest zeal, would, humanly speaking, have rendered him

extensively useful for many years to come. But for himself I rejoice rather than mourn. I exult in the thought that he has gained the world where dwell the saints in their glorious repose. Oh, what society awaits us there! Compared indeed with that world, this is the desert, this the solitude. May we and ours be now and ever numbered with the righteous, who enter at length through the gates into those blest abodes. With my best regards to dear Mr. Ellis,

I remain,

Your obliged and affectionate friend and servant,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

Two eminent ministers are mentioned above—the Rev. Theophilus Lessey, and the Rev. John H. Bumby, both whose names are enshrined in the hearts of many friends. Mr. Lessey was President of the Conference in the memorable centenary year, 1839; but his health failed soon after he had entered on his arduous duties, and on the 10th of June, 1841, he died in triumph, saying but a short time before, “Precious atonement! the sinner’s hope.” Mr. Bumby, whose departure for New Zealand in March, 1839, I well remember, was drowned by the upsetting of a canoe in the Bay of Thames, in that country. It was a mysterious dispensation which thus took away, so early, a man of such promise; but his death was blessed to many, and doubtless the Great Head of the Church had employment for him in a higher sphere.

Somewhat recruited in health, Mr. Etheridge went to Exeter, where he was able to prosecute his literary labours, and occasionally to occupy the pulpit. To Mrs. Ellis he wrote as follows :—

EXETER, *May 28th*, 1869.

MY DEAR LADY,

I know you will dispense with a formal apology for my delay in answering your last kind letter when I tell you that, after having written about one hundred and eighty pages since being here, I was subsequently obliged, by an attack of illness, to lay aside the pen altogether. I now feel considerably better, and will no longer delay to offer you my respects, though in this imperfect manner, and to assure you how much I am obliged by the interesting information you give me on the late melancholy event which has overshadowed your circle. Surely it will not be without its sanctifying uses ! Such must have been in the designs of the great Arbiter of life and death. Let us see that it have a salutary effect on our own hearts, and then we shall have more power to intercede for its efficacy on those of others. That, of course, depends on the use, so to speak, which the Spirit of God shall make of such occurrences, as without His convincing influence attending them, neither the passage of the dearest friend from our side to the unseen state, nor the apparition of one of its inhabitants, would be attended with any really lasting benefit. Oh, that we may meet her and every member of her family in the mansion of the redeemed ! My dear wife's family has recently had a most solemn admonition of this kind in the death of her eldest brother, Mr. Dodsworth Middleton, who was summoned away at an hour's notice by apoplexy. It

will be a great shock to Mrs. Buckle on her return from Italy, which is expected daily. Were you acquainted with the other sister, Mrs. Thompson? Her husband has obtained ordination by the Bishop (I think) of Montreal, and is now engaged in the duties of a clergyman in Canada. Mrs. Thompson will now at last, I hope, find an interval of that repose which for several years has scarcely fallen to her lot. I have preached twice since being here. Mr. Wood has kindly forbore to press me to do more than has been prudent. But I feel my throat and chest to be getting so far restored as to give me the hope of almost constant employment on Sabbath mornings, and perhaps once in the week. Providence mercifully led me and my child to very eligible lodgings on the next morning after our arrival in Exeter. But the persons are about to remove from the house, and so I shall be once more at large. I think of going down to the coast for three months, as I shall find opportunity of usefulness there, as well as probable advantage from the sea-side. I almost resolve sometimes to take a cottage, and, with the service of a steady and trustworthy person, to resume housekeeping. Nothing but the lingering hope that I have of yet being employed, either at home or abroad, in some stated sphere of ministerial labour, will prevent me from doing so, as, in addition to various other objections I have to a permanent residence in lodgings, that mode of life does not afford those feminine attentions which it will, with each successive year, be increasingly proper for my daughter to enjoy. The little book I named to you in my note from the island is nearly ready for the press. I hope to send it for the approval of our Book Committee next week, but much fear that owing to the advanced period of the Methodistical year, my knowledge of its acceptance by them

will be delayed till after Conference. The superintendent of this circuit, Mr. Wood, is one of the most exemplary men I have ever known. His life is a daily homily and pattern of holiness, zeal, and fidelity. He is the only minister I am acquainted with who literally visits as a pastor *all* the members of the Society, not only in the town, but, I believe, in each place in the circuit as well. May I beg my best regards to Mr. Ellis, whom I should regard it as no small privilege to know and converse with.

Ever, dear Mrs. Ellis, your most affectionate, humble servant,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

To speak in the very highest terms possible of the brethren in the ministry was ever Mr. Etheridge's delight ; and hence it is not surprising that he should pronounce such an eulogium on the Rev. Joseph Wood. Mr. Wood was one of the holiest of men, and, as a pastor, was indefatigable in his attention to all classes of his flock. He died on the 23rd of June, 1869, in the 73rd year of his age, saying, "I shall reign with Him upon His throne. Hallelujah !"

The position of a Wesleyan minister, whose health is not fully adequate to the demands of a circuit, is often a very trying one, and ought to secure for him more sympathy than he generally meets with. He is at a loss to know what course to take ; and if he is entirely dependent upon the Annuitant and Auxiliary Funds, his income is so small that he must frequently be driven to his wits' end to live and

keep out of debt, which last he is expected to do. Mr. Etheridge was not entirely dependent on these funds ; yet he longed to be employed in some way, and several plans were thought of by his friends for meeting his peculiar case, to which he refers in the following extract. The temporary editorship of the *Watchman* was named ; but for this office he did not think himself qualified. The sub-editorship of the magazine would doubtless have been most congenial to his taste, and had he been appointed to it its pages would have been enriched with many valuable articles.

From Budleigh Salterton, where he now resided, he wrote to Mrs. Ellis, saying :—

I had hoped to be of service in this place by being instrumental in raising the congregation in number and respectability as the groundwork of an enlargement of the society, which consists of fifty excellent persons in the humble classes of life. An excessively high-church feeling in the other inhabitants has rendered these few poor people and the other members of the congregation quite a caste by themselves. My object, in these circumstances, was to break down this distinction, and draw, if possible, under the influences of our ministry some of those who, could their prejudices be surmounted, might receive everlasting good within the walls of our chapel. One means for this end was the adoption of the abbreviated liturgy in our week-evening service, which I commenced with a course of sermons for Lent, to which you refer. This expedient answered beyond my expectations. Prejudice had been giving way before, but now I

was surprised to see the attendance of some whose appearance in a Methodist chapel I should, till then, have considered an impossibility. But, unfortunately, the Liturgical service is distasteful to our own people. Their prejudices, in fact, are as strong against "the prayers," as those of the Church people are against Methodism. There was an almost general refusal to repeat the responses, and some of the people remained without till the time for the sermon; so that between both parties my hopes of being useful here have fallen to the ground. I had been for some weeks led to think that for this cause I could employ the little strength I have more advantageously elsewhere, when yesterday I received a letter from 'Guernsey, making a proposal for me to reside there next year as a kind of salaried supernumérary. And several reasons would incline me to accede to such an invitation. Indeed, I feel no small drawing of mind towards it. This morning, however, along with your note, I had a letter from Mr. Reece, of Furnival's Inn, making me an offer from the *Watchman* Committee of the *pro tem.* editorship of that paper. My mind, therefore, as I said before, is just at this hour in a rather painfully fluctuating state. But I have been trying to look to the source of wisdom, and humbly hope that a calm and steady light may be mercifully thrown upon the proper path. I don't think that I am qualified for the *Watchman*. In politics I am certainly with them; but I am not politician enough for such an employment. My mind inhabits altogether a different region. It would feel like the spirit of another state being obliged to return again to the turmoils of earth. Unhabituated also to that description of inquiries necessary to the discharge of the office, I should soon betray my incapacity for it, and terminate the affair with nothing

but regret for having lost so much of life in vain. The Committee, however, I do think, have done me a great and undeserved honour in entertaining a thought of me for a moment.

That efforts to do good so well-meant, and, I must add, so well-devised, failed from the cause alleged, is surely to be much regretted ; but perhaps the handful of seed thus scattered was not entirely lost, and though the sower was discouraged, he has, it may be, found already some fruit resulting from his toil.

He was invited by Mrs. Ellis to be her guest at the London Conference, but was unable to accept her invitation. In writing to her, he expressed a hope that her hospitality would be extended to some one of his brethren, and then said :—

You must take hope for your dear mother ; the Lord grant that she may speedily be restored, and be able to praise Him as the health of her countenance and her God. The days of affliction will hereafter be seen to have been some of the most valuable of our earthly existence, seasons of corrective instruction, of access to God, of detachment from the perishing vanities of time, and proportionally sweeter expectations of a better and eternal inheritance. My destination for a time appears to be Guernsey. The preliminaries between me and the Circuit are so far settled as to await only the consent of the Conference. When writing about the editorship of the *Watchman*, I took the liberty of mentioning this scheme to Dr.

Bunting, who, I hope, will coincide with it. I am to preach once on the Sunday, and once in the week, with the ordinary share of pastoral duty. If I accomplish this, it may form, as I observed to Dr. Bunting, an intermediate stage between my present state and the resumption of full duty. When you mentioned to him the sub-editorship of the magazine, if the expression were allowable in addressing a lady, I should say you struck the nail on the head. That indeed would have met my inclinations a great deal more fully than the newspaper, for which I still feel persuaded I am very far from being qualified.

He went to Guernsey, according to the plan mentioned above, and in that beautiful island found much genial society, and opportunities innumerable for doing good. Writing to Mr. and Mrs. Ellis, Jan. 4th, 1843, he says :—

Since coming here I should have written some account of myself to you, had it not been for the continual pressure of occupation. I find the work here (albeit I had engaged only for a certain quantum) is such as to require all my time ; so that I have been obliged to devote the hours which under other circumstances would have been given to rest and relaxation, to hard work in finishing my undertaking on St. Matthew and the Hebrews. This, through great mercy, so far as the rough copy is concerned, I accomplished by the last night of the old year. I mean to get it printed on my own risk, and am only sorry that the Book Committee did not think it would suit them. So far as I am capable of being a judge in the case, I am of a different opinion. The climate here is very mild, with the exception of wet weather, of which, however, there has not been a great deal.

We have had hitherto scarcely a sign of winter. A large aurantia is growing up in full verdure by the side of the window of the room in which I am writing. The Methodists in Guernsey are a truly estimable people. The work tried me at first very seriously, the chapel being so large; but I have latterly got on so well, as to begin to hope it may not be impossible next year to obtain a Circuit somewhere in the south-west of England, where the chapels are small. I am profoundly thankful that some fruit has resulted from the truth preached, and we may hope yet to see greater things.

The work he here refers to is his "*Horæ Aramaricæ*," in which he gives a very lucid account of Aramean dialects, with a translation of the Peschito-Syriac version of the Gospel of St. Matthew, etc. He held the very general opinion that this Gospel was originally written in the Palestinean Syriac, or vernacular dialect of Palestine; but that the present Greek Testament is probably a translation from it by the inspired Evangelist himself.

To Mrs. Ellis he again wrote :—

GUERNSEY, *May 2nd*, 1843.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I last evening had nearly accomplished what for me was a long letter, in which I had entered upon various details on the melancholy subject you refer to in your last; but after proceeding for a while, I was so much pained with it, and so convinced of the impropriety, I may say, as well as unprofitableness of communicating the circumstances even to your-

selves, that I felt it a duty to refrain. I do truly express my conviction, however, that over the dying hours of Mr. B. the religion of the Redeemer, the Friend of sinners—the refuge and Saviour even of the eleventh-hour penitent—shed a strong and consoling ray of hope. Those hours were few, awfully so; for his death was very sudden; but they were occupied with exercises of agonizing contrition and prayer. Not at all anticipating such a fatal result, neither Mr. Jackson nor myself were present, though we had seen him on the preceding evening; but an excellent Christian, a simple-minded, devout, faithful, and earnest woman was with him during the night; of my estimate of that person I say all when I say that, in my own dying hours I should regard it no small privilege to have such an one with me. Far preferable, depend on it, than a whole college of theologians. Mr. B. knew the way to the Saviour, and I believe he died a broken-hearted penitent at His feet. And we know who has said, “Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.” With the honoured doctor, and with the brothers, I did, and do, and always shall, sympathize. I sometimes think that the Divine Arbiter of existence summoned him away in this manner for the merciful purpose of saving him from confirmed sin and endless woe. But as I said before, the subject is so painful that I do not like to write about it.

Notwithstanding the pressure of daily occupation, which has compelled me of late to give up all correspondence, I had been purposing for some time a reply to that kind and interesting letter I received before this last favour, and the perusal of which created feelings of pleasure and thankfulness within me that will not soon be forgotten. And I do still bless God for that manifestation of His goodness to you and yours, which you

there so devoutly acknowledge. How excellent is His loving-kindness, and how unalterable ! and therefore we will still put our trust under the shadow of His wings. I am concerned to find you speaking of your brother's health as in any way affected for the worse by his ministerial work. My serious apprehension has been that the scale of exertion which you describe is much too great for him, at the outset, as it is, of his career, and at a period when his constitution has not attained that confirmed vigour which I trust it is destined to possess. May the Lord protect, uphold, and eminently bless him. These are times in which men of his character are precious indeed.

On the subject of the pre-millennial coming of Christ, I am not surprised to find you and Mr. E. so deeply interested. I have been so more or less for several years ; and on the evening of Advent Sunday last I referred to it more fully than I suppose had been ever done in that pulpit before. The subject is one environed with such difficulties and dangers, that we cannot wonder at the hesitation there is among us to give it a prominence in our teachings. Still it is a solemn duty to ascertain what the truth really is, and then to make it known. It does not appear to me that the millenarians, so called, have been content with the truth, but have gone beyond it ; for a personal *residence* of the Saviour-King for a thousand years in Palestine, is what I never recognize ; but an epiphany, or manifestation of His glorious person for a brief interval amid the convulsions which will attend the overthrow of Antichrist, and usher in the era of blessedness, I think there is scriptural reason to expect. Permit me, my dear friends, with my sincerely affectionate regards to Mr. and Mrs. Elliott and sons, to remain, your much obliged friend and brother,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

To the views Mr. Etheridge entertained on the pre-millennial advent, reference will be made hereafter ; but it is evident from the above that he was far from being an extreme millennarian, for what he looked for was not the abode of Christ on the earth, or even over it, but His epiphany or manifestation only "for a brief interval." That there are strong grounds for this view of the matter will be admitted by Christians of the most sober judgment ; but, as Mr. E. observes, the subject is "environed with difficulties," and, for my own part, whilst I feel sometimes as if I should be glad to entertain the opinion, yet I hesitate because I would do honour to the Holy Spirit, believing that by His descent upon mankind in pentecostal power, the conversion of the nations to Christianity both can and will be effected. The prophecy of Joel ii. 28—32, has not yet received its full accomplishment ; when it does receive it, who can tell what momentous results will follow ?

CHAPTER IV.

Residence in France.

A VARIETY of reasons, but chiefly the state of his own and of his daughter's health, induced Mr. Etheridge, on leaving Guernsey, to visit the continent of Europe; and, in the year 1843, he took up his abode in Paris, where, for a time, he was able to render some assistance to the venerable William Toase, who was the first missionary to the French prisoners of war in the hulks on the Medway, and subsequently, for many years, Superintendent of the Wesleyan Missions in France. Mr. Etheridge loved him as a father, and never forgot the kindness he experienced from him during this period of his life.

In the public libraries of the fair city of Paris Mr. Etheridge found numerous facilities for prosecuting his favourite studies, and there, probably, he acquired many of those stores of learning which were afterwards brought into such excellent use. He became a member of the Asiatic

Society in the city, in the journals of which one of his works, if not more, was noticed in the most laudatory terms.*

The health of his daughter was considerably improved, and now he began to think that she would probably survive him, in which case he was anxious that she should be placed in good hands, and he wrote to his friends, Mr. and Mrs. Ellis, the following letter :—

PLACE DE LA MADELEINE RUE ROYALE ST. HONORE,
November 15th, 1843.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

Since receiving your kind favour, which reached me after a time from Boulogne, I had written a letter, in which I entered somewhat at large into my previous views and feelings on the subject on which you offer some observations in your last, which are at once sound and good in themselves, and in grateful accordance with my own mind ; but after I had sealed and directed the letter, the thought that I had no right to trouble Mr. Ellis in such a way occurred with such power to me, that I could not feel easy to send it, and so laid it aside. I will, however, even now, just mention, before proceeding to other topics, the leading idea that I entertain upon that matter, emboldened to believe that you will give it your kind consideration, and not withhold such advice as you may deem best. What I have had upon my heart for a long time is, that, should I be removed while Eliza is of tender age, it would be of unspeakable

* On his journey to Paris he called at Caen, where he first met with the Rev. G. Leale, now of Alderney, and subsequently their acquaintance ripened into a very warm and enduring friendship.

importance that she should have a friend of the same views and feelings with myself, to whom she could look for authoritative counsel with regard—1, to education ; 2, residence with a suitable family ; 3, religious ordinances ; and, 4, marriage ; and that chiefly and essentially in the way of preserving her from what is evil : for example, in placing her in a *Christian* school, and where she would not be expected to learn to dance ; and as to residence, that she does not become an inmate, as a boarder, of a family devoted to the world, and with whom she would be in danger of learning card-playing and those things ; as to religious ordinances, that she be not exposed to the influence of Puseyism, but be advised, as I have every reason to believe her own feelings will prompt her to do, to walk in the steps of her father and mother, and to say of their people they shall be mine ; and finally, as to marriage, if she be spared to grow up, that, so far as a Christian and friendly control will do it, she be kept from ever becoming the wife of a mere man of the world, however advantageous in other respects the match may be. Could I be permitted to live till I see her married to a man of education and a Christian (no matter about property), I should feel as a mariner who gains a desired haven. As to her temporal affairs, so far as things of that kind can be called stable and sure, she is in no danger in being subject to want or poverty.

But, as I said at the outset, I have no right to trouble you with these matters, and I shall not feel in the slightest degree grieved if you signify to me that it will be inconvenient to you to have anything to do with them. From the excellent ladies, the sisters of my wife, I have received nothing but the greatest kindness, and I have no doubt that they would affectionately and conscientiously fulfil what they may conceive to be their

duty towards their niece, whom they both greatly love. But life is uncertain, and one of them, Mrs. Buckle, does not reside much in England. From Mr. J. K. Sutcliffe also, who is trustee for her mamma's property, I could confidently look for all necessary legal administration, if needed ; but Mrs. Sutcliffe, with whom I have not the honour to be acquainted, cannot be expected to entertain any interest in parties of whom she has not the slightest knowledge. Whereas, when I turn to yourselves, I see everything that can inspire those wishes, the existence of which has led me to occupy your attention in this way. After all, such provisions may be altogether unnecessary, either by the shortness of her stay upon earth, or by the lengthening of my own. Still one likes, if possible, to be able to feel that he has done what the dangers and duties of life show to be so desirable.

We have been in Paris ever since the 15th of September. Before going to Boulogne I had intended to remain a few weeks at Caen, for the purpose of using some works in the University library there, but finding it shut for the vacation, I came on with the same object to Paris, where I was induced by the representations Mr. Toase made me to engage to become his helper till at least next June, God willing. I have accordingly been trying to do what I can, and am not without hope of being useful. You know our congregation here : it comprises many persons who I suppose would not prefer a Methodist chapel in England ; but they hear with great seriousness and attention. At first I was afraid I should have no acceptance with them, but latterly I have had a more comfortable feeling, and have found much encouragement of heart in pressing upon their earnest heed the things which accompany salvation. They are a very scattered congregation as to locality, so that we see but little of them except at chapel ; but from those with whom I have had any intercourse

I have had great kindness. Among these is the American *Chargé d'Affaires*, who, with his family, attends every Sunday. He is a great admirer of Mr. Toase, who stands, as you know, deservedly high with all ranks. He is indeed a dear man, and I love and reverence him much. Mrs. Toase is not in good health, and I fear will not greatly improve. They are going to remove, on her account, into a street in the Champs d'Elysees, in a set of rooms less remote from the ground-floor than those they have at present. For my own part, I am sufficiently elevated in that respect. We live in a boarding-house kept by a Swiss family, who are Methodists. I prefer this, as I have no servant to whom I could give Eliza in charge when I am obliged to be out. The apartment in which I am now writing is, I think, 112 steps from the ground. The system of living in France is not at all to my mind, and I shall be counting the months for the time to come to get away from it. Still none of us liveth unto himself: He whom we serve shall choose our inheritance, and fix the bounds of our habitation. I want more of the faith which makes one independent of the casualties of life, and which, in proportion as we possess it, gives us real liberty.

What a voyage you had to France! I thought of you during that gale of wind, but it was as though you were detained at Jersey. I missed the gratification of meeting you in Paris, which I regretted, from the recollection of the pleasure and profit I enjoyed in the opportunity of seeing Lady Ellis and yourselves in Guernsey. Do you teach everybody to love you so much as you did those of us you saw while there? My little girl unites with me in offering our best and affectionate regards and respects to her ladyship, and Mr. and Mrs. Ellis.

I remain, ever yours most truly,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

The provisions he had thought of for his beloved Eliza proved, as we shall see, unnecessary, as she did not survive him ; but how much Christian piety and wisdom does this letter display ! To dancing Mr. E. was a most decided enemy, and that his daughter should ever go to a school where she would be expected to learn to dance, was a thought he could never entertain. On this subject he agrees with the founder of Methodism, and it would be well if all Christian parents would reflect on the tendency of dancing as practised in the present day in mixed companies of males and females. It is unquestionably an evil, and can only lead to what is evil in the sight of God.

Another characteristic letter, full of information both with respect to Mr. Toase and to himself, he addressed to the same friends :—

PARIS, *March 28th*, 1844.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

Though perhaps by this time towards the last of those who have offered you their congratulations on the recent instance of Divine goodness vouchsafed on your behalf, I will yield to none of them in true thankfulness to the adorable Giver and Preserver of life, and in devout desires for the temporal and everlasting well-being both of the mother and her babe ; and I now give verbal expression to my past and present heart-wishes at the throne of grace for the blessing of the eternal Elohim on yourselves and your children. I am persuaded that I can only cease from keeping those wishes alive in my bosom by ceasing

to cherish the common principles of moral worth. I should have addressed a few lines to you some weeks ago on this and other points ; but of late, (in addition to mental engagements which have had pressing claims on my time as it has passed on, till the evening, I have found myself incapable of undertaking a letter, and also to the almost constant and exclusive care of my child,) I have been much unsettled as to my future residence while in Paris, so as to be able to give you my address. At length, however, this has been decided for at least the next three months after the 15th of April, when I remove into some chambers which I have taken at the same house in which I boarded when I first came here, namely, 8, Place de la Madeleine, Rue Royale, St. Honoré. I am still a boarder with that good family, but, on account of want of room, Eliza and I have lived in two chambers they hired for us nearly opposite our chapel, to which they have sent us our dinner from their kitchen. But this method has been so inconvenient that I have determined, after the above date, to board ourselves in chambers of my own, as I have said. The Swiss family with whom we have hitherto boarded are about to leave that house, and I have taken some of the rooms they have occupied. This way will be at once more comfortable and more economical also. As to comfort, in the English sense of the word, I have known but little of it since being in France. I have also had to pass through various exercises, which I trust have issued in leaving me a humbler and better man than when you saw me last ; at least, I think so sometimes, though upon this subject I speak dubiously. At the chapel the congregations are good, but Mr. Toase and myself long to see greater tokens of usefulness with respect to individual cases. We long to be able to say of this man and of

that man that he was born there ; but the fluctuating character of the assemblies we address renders this more difficult than with the more settled congregations of England. Mr. Toase ordinarily takes the morning service, and myself the evening one. This arrangement comports best with Mr. T.'s health, which, I am happy to say, has considerably improved within the last three months. The week evening services we divide between us. I preach every other Wednesday night, meet a class on Sunday afternoon, and on alternate Saturday evenings expound the Scriptures. In this last engagement I have often wished for your father's admirable talent, which rendered this important branch of the ministerial duty so apparently easy and natural to him. To me it is a matter of great labour and study. Delivering a discourse on some particular topic has always been comparatively easy, and on this account I have not given that attention to the explication of large portions at a time of the sacred text, which my personal edification and relative usefulness, it now appears to me, have demanded. Mr. Toase is a beautiful expositor ; it is really a treat to hear him. He is in the habit of taking chapters, *ad libitum*, from different parts of the New Testament ; but I find my own mind works best on consecutive portions, and so, after explaining some of the penitential Psalms, I began with the Epistles of St. Peter, both of which I have been enabled to go through. I now contemplate the First Epistle of St. John, in proceeding to the investigation of which I feel as if I were entering into the most holy place of the solemn temple of revelation. Oh, what manner of man ought I to be ! Glory be to God, His tender and omnipotent grace is all-sufficient for us.

I am now forty years of age ! The days and the dreams of

my youth are gone past for ever ; but the Lord is my portion, saith my soul. As I pass onward, the religion of the Redeemer becomes, I hope, increasingly to me the one great reality amid a world of shadows, and I trust to see the day when the eternal God shall be All in all. For this we will live. O blessed prospect, O true and holy life ! My thirst for the knowledge of whatever concerns the work, the will, and the kingdom of God seems to increase with my years, and in the study of them I find the sweetest solaces of my life. I mention these things, not from any absurd wish for self-laudation, God forbid, but to indicate to you your own prospective experience, being kept, as as you will be, through the power of the Most High through faith ; only you will both outstrip me, because I am unspeakably indolent and slow of heart.

Let me here return you my best and abiding thanks for your kind willingness with respect to Eliza. What you have said on that point has fortified and comforted my mind. I earnestly trust that the Lord will spare me to her, and her to me, that we may serve Him together in the land of the living. But, upon the event of my being called away while she is yet of tender age, your taking a Christian—and, shall I say, under certain modifications, a parental?—interest in her safety would be a service acceptable to Jesus, and lovely in the sight of His holy angels. May you, too, my beloved friends, be spared to each other and to your dear little ones ; and may “the blessings on you all be shed which God in Christ imparts !”

Eliza has improved wonderfully in French ; she speaks it like a little native ; but for me, alas ! as she says, my tongue is old, and cannot pronounce well. I have read French for these twenty years, but my pronunciation is still ludicrously bad.

We had last evening (I am now writing on April 1st) two addresses in French from Messrs. Gurney and Forster, who, with some other members of the Friends, are at Paris, on their way to the south, and very decent French it was. What an interesting-looking man is Gurney !

My life here has been too regularly occupied to admit of much sight-seeing. The treasures of the Louvre, the museums, Versailles, etc., are all as yet unexplored. Eliza goes to school for three hours every morning, and that time I spend either at the Royal Library or at the Sorbonne. At the College de France I have had the privilege of reading Hebrew with Professor Quatremere, and at the Faculty of Theology at Sorbonne with the Abbé Barges. I abhor Popery more than ever ; but I have, I must confess, learned, merely from literary sympathies, to love some of the priests. At the Bibliotheque Royale my inquiries have been exclusively directed to the history and literature of the Syrian Churches, for the purpose of an introduction to the three remaining Gospels. The first rough translation of the latter I finished last December. It was done in various places—in my quiet parlour at Guernsey, under the shady trees by the river-side at Caen, and in the chambers of inns ; and considerable portions on the pleasant seats in the garden of the Tuilleries in Paris, as well as in my own little domicile, a hundred and seventeen steps from the pavement, with nothing beneath the sky to look at save an ocean of roofs and chimneys, with the statue of Napoleon, towering above all, in the Place Vendome.

April 2nd.

Your dear brother's preferment gave me great pleasure to hear of, both for his own sake and for that of his parishioners.

How I should like to have a letter from him ! But I know how completely full his hours must be of necessary employment. If you would let me have his address I would fain write to him. May I beg my affectionate regards to Mr. and Mrs. Elliott and your brothers ? And when you see dear Lady Ellis, will you ask her to be pleased to accept my most respectful *devoirs* ?

I remain, ever yours truly and gratefully,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

Some of the topics here dwelt upon are full of interest, and especially the remarks on expository preaching, in which Mr. Etheridge took so much delight. How noble is the testimony he bears to the abilities of Mr. Toase as an expositor ! But he could estimate talent wherever he found it, and from the littleness of some men who can find nothing to be admired except in themselves, and *a few others*, he was entirely free. Expository preaching is, I fear, neglected by some ministers to the great loss of their usefulness in the pulpit. In these days, especially, our congregations need instruction in reference to *the meaning* of the word of God, and such instruction can be given only by expounding the sacred oracles in some consecutive way.

In the year 1845 Mr. Etheridge left Paris for Boulogne-Sur-Mere, and, his health being considerably restored, he became the pastor of the English Methodist Church in that city. His sister, Mrs. Hollis, kept his house, and his

daughter Eliza was the joy and solace of his heart. Whilst he prosecuted diligently his own studies he also guided hers, and being a child of more than ordinary gifts, her mind expanded under his instructions to his great satisfaction and delight. He believed in "the higher education of woman," and advocated the more general introduction of the study of Hebrew, as an element in the education of daughters as well as sons. He thus "brought his Eliza" to the highest fountains of Divine truth, which he says helped her to the knowledge of the Saviour, revealed His glory to her more fully, and gave that steady strength to her faith which enabled her to call Him her Lord and Saviour.*

From Boulogne Mr. Etheridge wrote to Mrs. Ellis, expressing among other things his regret at the shortness of time. "If the days," he says, "were forty-eight hours long, I should want them all." Alas! that some men deem twelve hours a day too long, and spend even them to little purpose whatever. In this letter, too, he laments over the godlessness that surrounds him, and utters his protest against the prevailing "atheism" of France. But I give the letter without abridgment.

* See the passage from the Preface to his work entitled, "Jerusalem and Cordova," quoted by Dr. Hoole, in Chapter VIII. of this Memoir,

RUE DU CANAL DES TINTELLORIES, BOULOGNE,

May 22, 1845.

DEAR MRS. ELLIS,

The letter which I received from you last, and *at last*, gave me the greatest pleasure, as, from the long interval that had elapsed since I had been so favoured before, I had been apprehensive that you were either suffering in health, or that I had unhappily forfeited my place in your remembrances. On both these accounts your kind note, I assure you, was doubly welcome. I had been looking forward to the probability of coming to London at the time of our anniversaries, and so delayed acknowledging this in the hope of seeing you and Mr. Ellis personally, and that is a pleasure which I trust to have for a few hours before many weeks are over. But I beg now, in the present manner, to express to you the habitual continuance of my prayerful wishes for your true happiness, temporal, spiritual, and eternal; and also the sacred gratification I feel whenever I see or hear any intimation of your progress in the glorious service of our Redeemer and God, in which both of you have obtained grace to enter. I was delighted last evening, in reading over the report in the *Watchman*, to be present, at least in spirit, at the Queen Street meeting, and to listen to the sound principles laid down in Mr. Ellis's opening speech. Well, this is as it should be. All glory be to God! May His Holy Spirit be ever with you. Life is short, even at its longest term. The world around is in a distressing state of moral ruin. The Saviour requires that His disciples should be the salt of the earth. Now is the time, both to be saved and instrumentally to further the salvation of others. Nor will our labour be in vain in the Lord. And only think what success really *is* in these

enterprises! My soul kindles into fervour at the prospect. We will not, then, give way at any time to discouraging influences; but will go forward by the blessing of our God. With respect to my poor self, I can say that my soul doth magnify the Lord; and when surveying His gracious dealings towards me, I should be twice dead if I did not praise Him. My health is wonderfully improved, and I am enabled steadily to discharge the entire duties of this station. Not for a single service at any time all the year have I found the necessary strength withheld. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in mine eyes. Time, too, is precious. It passes away on sounding wings. If the days were forty-eight hours long I should want them all. I am *abimé* in the thoughts, feelings, and exercises demanded by the blessed work. I am often tired to the last extreme, but—as is often said—in it, not of it. You know Boulogne. Your father's name among some who are old residents here is as a fragrant ointment poured forth, and greatly would they rejoice to see his face once more in our humble pulpit. He left a New Testament here, which is now in the possession of a family named Gregory. Our congregation is a very fluctuating one, most of the English being a moveable population. And to what a state of godlessness—yea, literal atheism—are many of them reduced! I always detested infidelity; but I abhor it more than ever since I have seen what it can make of an Englishman when he leaves his own country. But we are respectable at Boulogne compared with them at Calais. I have much anxiety at times, when I see whole families who have worshipped with us return to England, or remove elsewhere, lest thereby the congregation and society should seem to diminish under my ministry. Yet hitherto such vacancies have been supplied by

others; indeed, they tell me that the number of attendants this last winter has been greater than in past times. I find, both from the effect of success and failure upon it, that there is yet an odious stock of pride in this heart. I must beg my best and affectionate remembrances to your dear parents, whom I should so like to see. I trust your little dears are well. My child grows apace, and is a great comfort to me. With Christian regards to Mr. Ellis, I remain, dear madam, your affectionate friend,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

“I always detested infidelity,” says Mr. E. above; and well he might detest it. What has infidelity done for France? Is it not its infidelity that has brought it to its present state of degradation? Would the scourge of war have been permitted to fall upon its cities and its villages had it been a God-fearing and God-honouring nation? And what does infidelity make of Englishmen? or what would it make of the English nation were the English nation to yield to its seductiveness? Yet many of the working classes of this country are already under its fearful spell, and infidel or semi-infidel lectures are popular in most of our large manufacturing towns. It is assuming a scientific form at present, and all kinds of smatterers in science are setting themselves up as opponents to Christianity. They may not call themselves such, but such unquestionably they are; and there is not a little cause for alarm lest the masses of society should become impregnated with the deadly virus.

Soon after writing this letter, Mr. Etheridge took a tour through parts of France and Germany, and visited, among other places, the University of Heidelberg, where he became acquainted with some of its eminent professors. The following letters to his beloved daughter, giving an account of his journeys, will, I doubt not, be read with special interest :—

COLOGNE, *Wednesday night, June 17th, 1845.*

MY VERY DEAR ELIZA,

I arrived here about an hour ago, having till then been literally travelling all the while. I have been on the wheels all day yesterday, all last night, and all to-day. I have been thankful many times that I did not take you with me; for it would have been far more than you could support. For my own part, I am so wearied that I fell asleep in the omnibus that took me and my box from the railway-station here to the inn. It grieves me that I cannot sit down and write you a long letter, but it is now eleven o'clock, and I must be up again at six to-morrow morning, when I hope to post these lines before proceeding up the river. I had a very pleasant ride the first day, but too slow. It was nearly evening before they got to St. Omer, which is only half-way to Lille. We were therefore obliged to set forth at seven o'clock in the evening, and travel during the night. We reached Lille about sunrise. Though so unused of late years to being in the air so much at night, I was mercifully preserved from hoarseness and cold; and, though I am so tired now that I can hardly keep the pen from dropping, yet I will believe that I shall be all the better for the change of

scene and exercise, and come home strong, and ready to do the Lord's blessed work.

The railway-coaches started soon after I got to Lille, so that I did not call to see Mr. Marzials, the pastor there. I had, in fact, but just time enough to sluice my face and head under a pump in the inn-yard, and get a cup of coffee, when it was time to go. This has been the longest day, I think, I have ever yet known. Setting out so very early, and performing such great distances, it was difficult from keeping clear of the idea that it was towards evening when as yet it was only noon-day.

I have come to-day through Belgium and a part of the kingdom of Prussia.

When I write again, or rather when I come home, I will tell you which places I have passed in this long route, and what struck me there. And now, my dear child, may the Lord bless you, and keep you, and lift upon you the light of His countenance! In all my waking-hours, day and night, do I pray for your happiness.

I remain your affectionate Father.

ST. GOAR, ON THE RHINE, *June 20th*, 1845.

I HOPE, my dear Eliza, you got my letter, written at Cologne. It will at least have told you that I had arrived safely at that city. I will now give you some further account of myself. The ride through our part of France was very pleasant. I was much refreshed by the sweet smell with which the whole country was perfumed, from the scents of the hawthorn, clover, and newly-mown hay; even the garlic was refreshing. The road was often lined with tall trees for five, ten, or fifteen miles together. So

you may judge how pleasant it was, with an unclouded sky and air so transparent. The town of St. Omer is very dull and gloomy. The place has a priest-ridden look. I wonder how so many English live there, though I suppose it is a cheap town, and the neighbourhood around is more cheerful. I was rather sorry that I had to travel all night, as I had not done so for several years, but I took courage, for, with all the Lord's mercies, I ought to be and am thankful. . . . We arrived at Bethune at midnight, the moon shining beautifully. We stayed there a quarter of an hour. On getting out, the chimes in the *bellfroy*, or high belfry tower, rung the hour of twelve to a sweet tune, and in a clear silvery tone, which it was worth coming miles to hear. In this part of the country the chimes began to be common. Flanders has been famous for them. They call them *carillons*. I have heard a few in the old church-towers in England, but never anything so sweet as those of Bethune. After starting again I got two or three hours' sleep, and we arrived, as I told you, at Lille about sunrise. I had neglected to get my passport signed by the Belgic Consul in Boulogne, and was fearful that when I arrived at the frontier of Belgium I should be refused admittance into the country; but when there, though there were lots of police, no one asked me for my passport at all. I had been required to show it both at Omer and Lille, and, being a French one, it was quite correct. When fairly in the railway carriage, I began to be sensible of making some progress. Belgium—which was once called Flanders, or Vlendres, also the Netherlands, or Low Countries—is a highly cultivated kingdom—at least, the northern part; the southern—that is, the district between Brussels (the capital) and the river Meuse—is rough, mountainous, and woody. There are many

wolves and even bears there. The inhabitants of the southern part speak a language called Walloon, which is a kind of old French, such as was spoken five hundred years ago ; but in the northern part they speak Flemish (which is a dialect of the Dutch), though French is sufficiently common. At Courtraye, who should get into the carriage but a Capuchin friar? He wore a brown maison's frock or petticoat, surmounted by a short white serge cloak, with a three-cornered hood, which served him for a hat. His head was shaved so as to leave only a ring of hair round the middle. He was a fat man, of about my age, apparently of good education, and seemed ashamed of himself. There was another priest in the carriage, but they did not speak ; and when the Capuchin got out the priest whispered to his friend, who sat next him, with a manner which showed he did not like him. We stopped at Ghent (pronounced Gaunt), a fine old Flemish city. . . . We passed close to Louvain, that ancient city, so famous for its University in former times ; also Mechlin, where the Flemish lace used to be made. The French call it Mechlin Malines ; it is a pleasant city. . . . In passing through the country towards Brussels I thought of the great battle of Waterloo, which on, I think, that very day thirty years ago was fought between our brave army, under Wellington, and the mighty hosts of France, which, although many more in number than our army, were thoroughly beaten and ruined. The Duke of Wellington and many of his officers were at a ball at Brussels two nights before the battle. They left the ball-room for the army. Waterloo is nine miles from Brussels. We passed by Liege, a remarkably pleasant city.

Between Liege and Aix la Chapelle, owing to the mountainous nature of the country, there were no less than nineteen

tunnels or dark passages. The open country is beautifully wooded. Aix la Chapelle is a celebrated city. It was built, I believe, by Charlemagne. The Germans call it Aachen. On referring to a book, I find that Charlemagne beautified not built it; it was a town so far back as the time when the Normans had possession of three parts of Europe. They called it *Aquis grani*, from the warm springs there—whence the name Aachen or Aix. Charlemagne was buried in the *Dom Kirche* or Cathedral of the city. But though the spot of his tomb is marked, the body is no longer there. The account which I have just read states that “the vault below is now empty, having been opened by the Emperor Otho in 997. He found the body of Charlemagne, not reclining in his coffin, as is the usual fashion of the dead, but seated in his throne as one alive, clothed in the imperial robes, bearing the sceptre in his hands, and on his knees a copy of the gospels. On his blessed brow was the crown; the imperial mantle covered his shoulders, the sword ‘Joyeuse’ was by his side, and the pilgrim’s pouch, which, emperor as he was, he had always borne while living, was still fastened to his girdle. All these venerable relics were removed and used in the coronation ceremonies of the succeeding emperors of Germany.” They are now deposited at Berlin; the throne however remains at Aix. I remember about four or five years ago, on reading in the newspapers the death of one of Bonaparte’s sisters, the Princess Pauline, it was stated that she died putting her trust devoutly in a holy relic (a ring, I think, taken from his finger), from the tomb of Charlemagne. You and I have something better to trust in—have we not my dear?—even the mercy and merit of our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings and only Saviour.

The weather in the morning had been most intensely hot, but about two it blew a sudden squall, with black clouds ; then came thunder and a rain, which for violence and length combined I have seldom witnessed. It continued raining nearly the remainder of the day, which then became very chilly. We arrived in Köhn at ten. I hope, my beloved child, you continue well ; and may the Lord bless you now and evermore.

So daily prays your affectionate Father,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

BASLE, *Saturday night, June 21st, 1845.*

MY DEARLY BELOVED DAUGHTER,

I arrived here about an hour ago, and, having had some tea, I will begin to write you another letter before going to bed. I trust you got my first from Cologne, and that by Monday you will have the one I posted to-day at Heidelberg. I left off at my arrival at Cologne. The next morning I was up early, finished the letter to you, and then went and saw the *Dom Kirche*, or Cathedral, pronounced by the Germans *Dome Kereshe*. This is much finer than anything we have seen in France ; but, though begun about 600 years ago, it has never been finished ; 300 years since a stop was put to the building, and I saw on the unfinished tower the crane or timber-work by which the stones used to be raised up. Three years ago, however, the Prussian Government determined to complete it, and they are going steadily on with the work. The inside impresses one's mind with the idea of solemn grandeur. I am glad I have seen it, and I hope that one of these days you will see it also. Here are many beautiful tombs of bishops and warriors. Here

is the tomb (so they call it, but believe it who may, I do not) of the three wise men, or magi, who came to adore our Saviour when a babe in Bethlehem. Their skulls are shown through a place in the tomb. Their names are said to have been Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. Great riches were once contained in this tomb, the accumulated presents of the superstitious. They say that even now there are three millions of franks' worth of jewels and other things within it. But perhaps this is nearly as false as that the bodies of the three wise men are buried here. I then saw the church of the Jesuits, a beautiful structure, and rich in good paintings; and after that the church of St. Ursula, where I had read were the bones of the eleven thousand virgins; and sure enough the place is stocked with skulls and bones, on shelves and in recesses, all round the church. Three virgins attended St. Ursula when she came to convert the ancient inhabitants of that country, and they were all killed by the barbarians. But this, too, is an extravagant fable. I will explain it to you when I get home. I then returned to breakfast, and found a young Englishman, who was on his way home, having come to see the Rhine, but who had not patience enough to go as far as where its beautiful scenery begins, as he said he did not like the foreign manners of the people. I told him it was probable when he was again in England he would be sorry he did not persevere. But whether he took my advice I do not know, as I had to leave soon after breakfast by the train for Bonn. It is a large and healthy city up the river. A steamer was to start two hours later; thus by going on in the railway train I had those two hours to spend in looking at Bonn. It is a large and healthy city, the seat of a famous university. I went into the latter, and asked to see the

library. The librarian showed me great politeness, and introduced me to one of the professors, with whose conversation I was much pleased. The German students are all great smokers, and are fond of using pipes beautifully ornamented. I bought one as a keepsake, and will show it you. I suppose I must bring you home a trinket of some kind, must I not? The steamer came by at half-past three, and I embarked on the noble river Rhine. This river rises somewhere in the Alps, and pursues a course of, I believe, 900 miles to the sea. It is much celebrated on many accounts. As you sail along you are continually seeing objects of great historical interest, as well as scenery of a very fine character. This, however, can only apply to a certain portion of the river,—that between Bonn and Mayence. The river, both above and below those places, is not even pretty; the banks being flat, and with no trees, except a few willows and poplars. But the part between Bonn and Mayence, which requires two days to ascend, is certainly very fine. The banks on both sides rise high, often into mountains, and abound with forest woods and vineyards. Vines are cultivated on terraces high up the banks. You will see them for fifty miles together. Here and there also there are old ruined towers, the remains of castles once occupied by the robber knights who used to live by the plunder of travellers and voyagers on the river. From their high towers they could see them coming either by land or water, and then went down with their armed men and robbed them. This was done so continually that at length, in the thirteenth century, the large cities of Germany, whose merchants dared not travel without being killed or robbed by these banditti, combined to put them down. They raised an army, which took most of these castles and dismantled

them ; but their ruins remain, some less, some more perfect. I could see with our little eye-glass the grass waving on the tops of their old walls. A German writer, in a book that I have here, thus describes the Rhine : " A river which presents so many historical recollections of Roman conquests and defeats,—of the chivalric exploits in the feudal periods,—of the wars and doings of modern times,—of the coronation of emperors whose bones repose by its side,—on whose borders stand glorious cathedrals—whose banks present every variety of wild and picturesque rocks, thick forests, fertile plains ; vineyards, sometimes gently sloping, sometimes perched among lofty crags, where industry has won a domain among the fortresses of nature,—whose banks are ornamented with populous cities, flourishing towns and villages, castles and ruins with which a thousand legends are connected ; with beautiful and romantic roads, and salutary mineral springs,—a river whose waters offer choice fish, as its banks offer the choicest wines, which in its course of 900 miles affords 630 miles of uninterrupted navigation from Basle to the sea, and enables the inhabitants of its banks to exchange the rich and various products of its shores,—whose cities, famous for commerce, science, and works of strength, which furnish protection to Germany, are also famous for being the seats of Roman colonies and ecclesiastical councils, and are associated with many of the most important events in the history of mankind. Such a river it is not surprising that the Germans regard with a kind of reverence, and frequently call it in their poems Father or King Rhine." It was while passing along the most beautiful districts of the river that I wished you were with me. I knew, however, the severe tax of labour and exhaustion you would have had to undergo, both in coming thither and in re-

turning, and felt that it was best this time to leave you at home. When I am tired, and have inconveniences, I am satisfied that you are not with me ; but when I am pleased with what I see and feel, then I want you to share the pleasure. There are some verses in the book from which I have quoted above, which well enough express my feelings on the point as I proceed along some of the most beautiful of the river views :—

“ The castled crag of Drachenfels Frowns o’er the wide and winding Rhine,

Whose breast of waters broadly swells Between the banks which bear the vine ;

And hills all rich with blossomed trees, And fields which promise corn and wine,

And scattered cities crowning these, Whose far white walls along them shine,

Have strewed a scene which I should see

With double joy wert thou with me.

“ And peasant girls, with deep blue eyes, And hands which offer early flowers,

Walk smiling o’er this paradise. On high the frequent feudal towers Through green leaves lift their walls of grey, And many a rock which steeply lours,

And noble arch in proud decay, Look o’er this vale of vintage bowers.

But one thing want these banks of Rhine—

Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine !

“ The river nobly foams and flows, The charm of this enchanted ground,

And all its thousand turns disclose, Some fresher beauty varying round ;

The haughtiest breast its wish might bound, Through life to dwell
delighted here ;

Nor could on earth a spot be found To nature and to me so dear,
Could thy dear eyes, in following mine,
Still sweeten more the banks of Rhine."

Before the room in which I am now writing this, at Basle, in Switzerland, the same river is rolling away in a most powerful manner. Where does all the water come from ? " O Lord, how manifold are Thy works ! In wisdom hast Thou made them all."

Of you, my beloved child, I think about, and pray for you, every hour. May a merciful Providence keep you and your aunt in constant safety ! I shall soon set my face homeward again, now, and trust to arrive in peace ; but, whether present or absent, we each and all need His presence and grace to make us happy. I hope you will all profit by the ministry of Messrs. Turnbull and Richards. I trust to be able to return to my work all the better in body and mind, and to devote all my time and strength to the glory of our God. . . .

Be assured, dearest love, that I am

Your most affectionate father,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

These beautiful letters bespeak the tenderness of a father's heart, and are moreover replete with interest to all lovers of continental scenery. I am indebted for them to Mrs. Hollis, by whom they have been preserved with special care. Another brief note, dated Basle, June 27th, informed

his daughter that he hoped to reach Boulogne in a few days ; and, on doing so, he resumed his work with fresh vigour, and prosecuted it with great delight. During his tour he had availed himself of every opportunity of enriching his already valuable stores of knowledge by visiting the libraries of great cities, and the stores thus accumulated were laid up for future use. He was considerably benefited by his journey, and was able to enter on new plans for the benefit of his flock. There was an English society in the town of about thirty members, and a congregation of between two and three hundred persons. "Many of the Scotch," says the Missionary Report for 1846, "employed in the *fabrique* at *Capécun*, who have been living for years in the neglect of the Sabbath, and the outward observation of the religion of their fathers, have been drawn to our sanctuary, and promise to become regular attendants on the means of grace. An English Popish priest having been appointed to labour at Boulogne, Mr. Etheridge deemed it his duty to commence a course of monthly lectures upon the grounds and reasons of the Protestant faith, and is much encouraged to proceed with the course by the interest manifested by the congregation generally, and by the presence of individuals who have not previously attended our chapel." These lectures, from Mr.

Etheridge's carefully-prepared manuscript, will, I hope, be published hereafter. To Popery he became an uncompromising foe, believing it to be "the mystery of iniquity," and inimical to the highest interests of mankind. That it should possess such power over the human mind was to him a matter of astonishment and of deep regret ; but it is a system of corrupted Christianity which appeals partly to the imagination, but still more to the fears of men, and which thus draws them into its coils, from which it is then almost impossible to escape. But its days are numbered, and the events of the year 1870 will perhaps prove the beginning of the end, when, we trust, thousands will shake themselves from its mighty spell, and begin to inquire for the light which the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ alone can give.

I close this chapter with the following translation by Mr. Etheridge from the German of Mahlman, too beautiful to be lost :—

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

"Du hast deine säulen dir aufgebant."

Thy columns Thou hast reared on high,
And built this universal shrine,
Wherein faith's reverential eye
Discerns Thy majesty divine.
O Lord ! Thy everlasting might
Shines in the morning's golden light,
And in the myriad stars of night ;

While to all Life from Thee 'tis given
To say, "Our Father, Thou, who art in heaven."

And, full of love, Thine eye regards
What Thy resistless will begun,
And bounteous gifts on all awards,
While sings for joy each rolling sun.
Lord, Lord ! the mind that knows Thee nigh
Awakes from sorrow and from shame ;
The tongues that call Thee Father cry,
"Hallowed for ever be Thy name."

O boundless Love, whose tenderest grace
Descends on all our dying race,
How blessèd is thy throne !
There peace waves high the unwithering palm,
And joy pours forth her grateful psalm,
And freedom swells the jubilean tone !
Thy reign, O Lord, is truth and equity,
Thy reign our renovating world shall see ;
Thy kingdom come to me !
Come, angel, from yon holy mount of God,
Stand midst the wastes of this low world of gloom
Come, cast the seeds of righteousness abroad,
And earth a glorious paradise shall bloom.

O Thou, whose sole unmeasurable might
Fulfil the purpose of each wise decree !
Thy counsels who can pierce ? Thy way is right
To all who with our dying vision see :

Our onward path to death is wrapp'd in mystery ;
Yet lead'st Thou all who trust Thee, till the home
They gain where Thy redeemed shall holy be!
Thou will'st Thy creatures good ; Thy blessèd will,
Even as in heaven, in us, on earth, fulfil.

All eyes upon Thee wait, nor look in vain ;
In faithfulness and love dost Thou sustain
The innumerable hosts of all who live ;
Our daily bread still, Father, daily give !
 Speak the blessing, and the field
 Shall its richest treasures yield ;
 The plenteous corn on autumn's day,
 Waves in the sun's resplendent ray ;
 The cattle graze in valleys still,
 The clusters redden on the hill,
 And, glowing 'mid the leaves, appear
 The ripen'd fruitage of the year.

Thou reignest in the holy place on high,
Where, rapt in adoration, on Thee wait
The hierarchies who sang our nature's birth ;
Yet from that shrine of light Thy awful eye
Pierces the shrouds of guilt and misery
That mantle blackly o'er our ruined earth.
O let Thy look be pity, and our moan
For speedy mercy come before Thy throne !
 Helpless dies our prostrate race ;
 Immeasurable is Thy grace.
Stretch forth Thy sceptre, and we live.
Forgive us, even as we forgive.

Save, or we perish ; save us and defend
From evil and temptation to the end.
Enwrapp'd in gloom, assail'd by countless woes,
Our soul holds fast the promise of repose.
In prayer for help we spend our fleeting breath,
And send our thoughts high o'er the grave and death.
With steadfast hope we wait the morning ray
Which ushers in at length an endless day ;
Then, then, from all the forms of ill we rest,
And in Thy presence are supremely blest.

The kingdom, power, and majesty divine,
O Lord of hosts, for evermore are Thine !

J. W. E.

CHAPTER V.

English Circuits.

SWEET as the breath of a summer's morn is the return of health to one who has for a considerable time been the subject of some depressing malady ; and by the Christian, and especially by the Christian minister, it is hailed with inexpressible delight and gratitude. After a recovery from sickness, Charles Wesley wrote :

All hail, Thou lengthener of my days,
Thy dear preserving love I praise,
And thankfully receive
The present of my life restored :
O may I spend it for my Lord,
And to Thy glory live.

And such, doubtless, were Mr. Etheridge's sentiments, when by changes of scene and occupation, by travel in Germany and France, and other means to which he resorted, he regained much of his former strength, and was able fully to resume his loved employ. His health was to a great

extent restored before he left France, and at length, being able to undertake the work of an English Circuit, he returned to the shores of his own country, and was appointed by the Conference to Islington, at that time the eighth London Circuit. There he spent three years of very happy toil ; greatly esteemed both by the people and his colleagues. One of the latter, the Rev. John Hartley, says : " He was a choice man, loveable, learned, godly in no common degree ; and I shall always account it a singular happiness to have been his colleague. In August, 1847, we had just received the ' Stations ' from the Conference, and met in Kingsland Road, London. After expressing his pleasure that we were to be thus associated for another year, he then, as we stood in the road, in the most unaffected and natural, but devout and solemn manner, added, ' Well, the Lord be merciful unto us ! ' and went on to pray for God's blessing on our work. It showed me how blessed was the bias and habit of his soul, and on what terms he was, so to speak, with our common Lord."

At this period he published one of the most valuable of his works, " The History of the Syrian Churches," which immediately attracted the attention of reviewers of almost all schools of religious thought. " There appeared," says Mr. Hartley, " a somewhat extended and very laudatory

notice of the work in *The Theologian*, a High Church quarterly. It concluded somewhat in these terms: 'We cannot collect from the title-page of Mr. Etheridge's book any particulars respecting himself; but from an advertisement, which is subjoined, of "Twelve Sacramental Discourses" preached at Boulogne-sur-Mer, we presume that he is a priest of the Anglican Church. He does not, however, entertain those views of the Divine right of Episcopacy which we deem to be the truth.' After quoting passages from the book in proof of this, and expressing further regret, the reviewer wound up by thanking our friend for the 'valuable contribution to Biblical literature.' When I told him of this, there came over his usually grave face a quiet smile, and he was not a little amused with the mistaken supposition about him."

Soon after the publication of this work he received the degrees of M.A. and Ph. D., the latter from the University of Heidelberg. They were honorary, but they were as richly merited as if he had undergone the severest examination, and therefore only a just expression of the appreciation of his attainments and his worth. The Doctor continued to pursue his Syriac studies; and, like one who is travelling through a mountainous district, he no sooner reached a lofty eminence than he aspired to one yet

higher. In 1849 he published "The Apostolic Acts and Epistles, from the Peshito, or Ancient Syriac,"* in continuance of his former work on the Gospels, thus completing the translation of the Syriac New Testament. "It was accomplished," he says, "amid the daily toils of the Christian ministry in London, and in hours which might, in some respects, have been advantageously spent in mental or bodily recreation or repose." That his mind could bear the tension which the production of such works necessarily caused proves that it was a mind of no ordinary degree of strength; whilst the fact that he published these works with little or no prospect of pecuniary advantage, was indicative of his ardent attachment to Biblical literature and his earnest desire to promote its interests. In the preface to the latter work he says:—

At the tribunal of Biblical criticism the writer respectfully prays for a kind but impartial judgment on the correctness or incorrectness of the translation. It is very proper for him to attest his own belief that, through the adorable grace of God, he has been enabled to give a version in all essential respects a faithful representation of the Syriac Scriptures. Did he not believe so, he would not presume to offer it; but that class of readers who, though intelligent students of the Bible, have not directed their attention to this branch of inquiry, will naturally

* See Chapter VIII. of this Memoir, by Dr. Hoole.

look for a corroborative testimony to the correctness of such an estimate, that their confidence in the translation may be warranted by some competent authority.

Such a judgment, as he spoke of, the work received, and his fame as one of the most eminent Syriac scholars in the land was fully established, and in many quarters generously acknowledged. The Prologemena to this volume were very highly spoken of. They contain a synopsis of the Apostolic Epistles, from which I select the following on the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews :—

The economy of mercy to our race is based upon redemption, and the covenant ratified by that matchless sacrifice whose blood is at once the price of our ransom, the satisfaction for our guilt, and the medium by which the covenant itself becomes binding. Jesus, the Lamb of God, is the victim by whom the covenant has been so ratified. Of this transaction the blood-sprinkling at the inauguration of the terrene Levitical system was a foreshowing. That system was rendered valid for its defined ends by the sacrificial blood of inferior creatures. But the dispensation of grace which actually saves, and brings us to heaven, has its validity from a sacrifice costly beyond thought—the immeasurably precious atonement through one offering, once for all, of the one only High Priest who is now in heaven, and who will again appear, not to suffer for sin, but to consummate the salvation of His expecting people.

Many such passages occur in this volume, and theological

students might cull from it with great advantage. It is one of those books which lie a little way beyond the ordinary course of theological reading, but is not the less valuable on that account; and, in these days especially, a Christian minister should not be content to tread the beaten track, but to deviate from it occasionally and gather treasures from less frequented paths. Dr. Etheridge's labours in this department of literature ought to be more highly appreciated than they are, and the day will come, I trust, when such works as his will be far more extensively studied, and far more generally admired.*

From Islington Dr. Etheridge removed to Bristol; where troublous times fell upon the Church, and where his gentle spirit was often grieved by an agitation which threatened at one time to break up the once flourishing societies in that city. The Rev. C. Cooke was the superintendent of the circuit, and on him descended the ire of the party who were then spreading disaffection among the people; but he was nobly sustained by Dr. Etheridge, "who," says Miss Cooke, "shone as fine gold in the furnace of persecution." On one occasion he indignantly refused to touch his salary

* The above remarks were written before I had received the chapter by Dr. Hoole. It will be seen that he, too, regrets that so little attention has been paid to these works.

because offered to him by the disaffected steward, to the exclusion of the two new men, as Mr. Cooke and Mr. Pengelly were called. On another occasion he went to meet the class of one of the leading agitators, and on his arrival in the vestry found it full, and the passage leading from the chapel crowded with people, whilst some were climbing up at the window to obtain a view of the proceedings within. To one person the Doctor spoke in the most kind and gentle manner, but his counsel was met by a rude personal attack. To this he patiently listened; but when the party went on to attack his superintendent, Mr. Cooke, he could bear it no longer, and taking up his hat, left the place and hastened to the residence of Mr. Cooke, to whom he related in sorrowful terms the circumstances which had there occurred.

Mr. Pengelly observes: "His love to his brethren and his readiness to submit to inconvenience were shown by the offer he made to share his house with me and my family when it seemed likely that the house I occupied would have to be relinquished. Although that became unnecessary through the gracious offer of a residence by the late Mr. Irving, and the increased subscriptions of the friends, yet it served to bring out the kindliness of our late brother, and was among the traits of character to endear him to the

memory." Another of his colleagues in Bristol, the Rev. W. Hurt, says, "I greatly esteemed and loved him. A more faultless and saintly man I have not known."

To these testimonies respecting the character of Dr. Etheridge, I will here add that of the excellent lady to whom so many of his letters were addressed, and who knew him well. "His humility and forbearance," says Mrs. Ellis, in a communication to me, "were equally remarkable. He really did in honour prefer others to himself, and never would permit an unkind remark on the absent to be made in his presence without some gentle plea or excuse for them. Once in my house he was reprov'd by a warm-temper'd superintendent for neglecting to preach at S—— the previous night. The colour mounted to his cheek, as he slowly replied, '*My record is on high, you yourself sent me to N——.*'" The superintendent had no doubt forgotten that he had done so, but this soft answer must have made him somewhat ashamed of himself.

It is much to be regretted that any misunderstanding should ever arise between colleagues in the ministry; and happily, among Wesleyan ministers, co-pastors though they generally are, *serious* misunderstandings do not very often occur. For, as a general rule, they love one another, are willing to bear and to forbear, can make allowances for one

another's peculiarities, and are ready to forgive a wrong word almost as soon as it is uttered. But a colleague of Dr. Etheridge could have, I should think, little occasion to take offence *with him*. "A man's true greatness," says one, "lies in the consciousness of an honest purpose in life, founded on a just estimate of himself and everything else, on frequent self-examination, and a steady obedience to the rule which he knows to be right, without troubling himself about what others may think or say, or whether they do or do not do that which he thinks, and says, and does." And what says the same lady further of Dr. Etheridge? "He united," she says, "the simplicity of a child with the power of a philosopher, and there was in him an utter absence of the fear of man and an utter indifference to the value of his praise, so long as he felt that he himself was walking *straight on in the right path*, as he not unfrequently expressed it. He possessed, too, a most exquisite taste; and a sincere love for real poetry, which he would often quote in the pulpit with great effect." In a word, he was a rare man, and to have been associated with him in the work of the Christian ministry must, to some minds at least, have been deemed a high privilege and a great blessing.

The Doctor was invited to remain a third year in Bristol, and the best friends of Methodism in the circuit urged his

re-appointment. But for some very special reason he was removed, to his very deep regret. Writing to his representative, Mr. Cooke, he says :—

I received your communication yesterday with deep regret. The tidings you give me of my removal from Bristol were a sore disappointment, which has broken up many cherished plans for useful agency here, and has given me heartfelt sorrow. I will not, of course, presume to dictate to you and the Committee, and can only pray that this and every other change now transpiring may be for the best.

In a second letter on the subject he speaks still more strongly, and seems to think that some reflection was intended on his own conduct. "I have not only tried to do my duty here," he says, "but have held fast by the principles of our church-system at a time when my fidelity was put to the severest test. Why I am then dealt with in this summary manner, I am at a loss to conceive." It was certainly to be regretted that so pure and sensitive a mind should be thus wounded ; but the times were extraordinary, and the difficulty of stationing certain ministers very considerable. In justice to his memory, it must be said that his fidelity to Methodism was not questioned for a moment ; but, for special reasons, not referring to himself, and which it is not needful now to state, it was deemed necessary

to send another minister to Bristol that year. That the course taken was a right one, I am not prepared to say ; but he bowed to it as a dispensation which divine Providence could, and doubtless did, cause to work for future good.

He was appointed to the Second Leeds Circuit, where his ministry was highly esteemed, and where he delivered again his lectures on Romanism. But his daughter's health was feeble, and for her sake, and with the hope that by transplanting the tender flower to a more genial soil it might be spared, he removed in 1853 to Penzance in Cornwall, where Mr. Corbett Cooke was again his senior colleague. The beauty of Penzance it is impossible to describe. For the invalid its climate is one of the mildest and most salubrious that can be selected, whilst its noble bay, graced by St. Michael's Mount, and sweeping round in a majestic curve towards Newlyn, forms one of the most charming panoramas on which the eye can gaze. All this Doctor Etheridge loved. But he loved still more the people of his charge, whom he found to be generous, warm-hearted, and most affectionate ; and he loved to preach to the noble congregations that gathered round him the unsearchable riches of Christ.

In reference to this period of his ministry, Mr. C. Garland has favoured me with the following remarks : " On coming

to Penzance in 1853, he opened his commission from Ps. lxviii. 19, 20. It was an able discourse, but strikingly different from the first sermon I heard from him twenty years before. The *memoriter* method, if such there had been, was evidently discarded altogether, and he trusted to the extemporaneous power of clothing the leading thoughts that were previously arranged. Vastly preferable as this method generally is, it may be doubted whether, in the Doctor's case, it was any improvement, for his delivery was in some degree hesitating, and his frequent halting in the choice of his words prevented them falling on the ear with that agreeable effect which marked his former preaching. Another very remarkable difference showed itself in the course of his ministry—the almost entire absence of that awakening element which is mainly founded upon terrible exhibitions of truth. It hardly needs to be observed that this is by no means an uncommon case with preachers to whom maturer years bring no diminution of real zeal and usefulness, though abating a certain fiery ardour which attended their earlier ministrations. In the Doctor's case, however, other agencies had been at work in producing this change. That cast of thinking naturally engendered by the application of the confirmed student pervaded most of his sermons, and when this takes place, mere appeals to


the passions are generally overlooked. . . . With all classes in Penzance the Doctor was a great favourite, and Christians of all denominations were delighted with his preaching. His richly-furnished mind, his readiness to meet all demands from whatever quarter, whether in the pulpit, on the platform, or in the lecture-room,—his widely catholic spirit, with the guileless and childlike simplicity of his character, made him the friend of all; and indeed it is hardly possible to imagine that such a man could have an enemy in the world. . . . The Sunday discourses of Dr. Etheridge at Penzance, though highly prized by the selecter portion of his audience, were not so keenly enjoyed by the general hearers as those of the week evening, which consisted for the most part of an exposition of some chapter, or section of a chapter, from the Old Testament, embracing matters of Jewish history, geography, civil and ecclesiastical polity, etc. In this way he did more than any minister known to the Circuit for giving his hearers a view of the breadth and comprehensiveness of the Scriptures. In these lectures the treasures of his learning and reading were produced with a fulness, the charm of which was heightened by the entire absence of everything that savoured of ostentation. No thought of display or parade ever seemed to enter his mind. He rather appeared to give his congregation credit

for being nearly as well informed as himself, and sometimes in the pulpit of a small country chapel he would pour forth a stream of Hebrew like one who had not the slightest doubt that every man and woman on the benches before him was perfectly familiar with that venerable language. Many of his discourses on general gospel subjects were models of evangelical richness and beautiful illustration; and he would sometimes with great felicity give to a Scripture passage an accommodated use, as when warning the people of the awful danger of postponing conversion to advanced years, he said, ‘My brethren, take heed *that your flight be not in the winter.*’”

It is not unfrequently the case that as Christian ministers advance in life their preaching becomes more tender, and their exhibitions of the wrath of God towards sinners milder and less frequent. But “the awakening element” should never be entirely wanting, and ministers of long experience are better able to employ it aright than those who understand human nature less perfectly. To *win* souls should be the object of the ambassador of Christ, whenever possible, and only when the conscience is too obdurate to be *persuaded* should measures be adopted to awaken its fears. It is difficult, however, to know in what proportion the several doctrines of Christianity should be preached, and

only as ministers are taught of the Spirit will they be prepared to use aright the arrow which shall bring conviction, or the balm which should heal the troubled soul.

For the following reminiscences of the Doctor's ministry in Penzance I am indebted to Miss Cooke. Preaching on one occasion on the value of religion, he related an anecdote of a Spanish monarch whose revenue was counted by millions, who reigned in prosperity fifty years, but who left a record that he had enjoyed during his life but fourteen happy days! And then the preacher spoke of the trial of a father who saw an only child fading away before his eyes, and said, "Woe to the poor wretch who has no religion to support him when travelling over the sandy waste of life, no tree to give him shade, no fountain to yield refreshment!"—and many hearts were touched, knowing that *his only child* was drawing very near the grave. At Mr. Carne's he spoke one day of having visited St. Michael's Mount in company with Dr. Southey, and then entered into a delightful conversation on the words, "There shall be no more sea." Very pleasant were the meetings held at Mr. Carne's. The Doctor would commence a conversation on some interesting subject, throwing down his pearls for others to pick up; and the stream of converse would flow on, too often leaving him behind, after his fruitless endeavours,



on account of his deafness, to catch the remarks of different persons. "At our own dear father's birth-day parties," says Miss Cooke, "with the poor of the flock he would quite unbend himself, lay aside the learned doctor, and chat freely with one and another, telling them some amusing anecdote,—on one occasion how he was nearly reported to have said, 'planets in their spheres grow thin,' instead of 'dim,' showing how slight a misprint might affect the sense."

His deafness, under which he had suffered for several years, and which increased as time advanced, was a great and sore trial. His conversational powers were considerable, and he was fond of the conversation of others; but it was with the utmost difficulty that he was able to hear, even in the smallest circle of friends; whilst in meeting classes he could not get to know the experience of the members, and could only address them, therefore, in some general though always appropriate way. To lose the sense of hearing is to anyone, but especially to a Christian minister, a deprivation which none can estimate, for it makes him appear distant and reserved when perhaps he is naturally open and free, and it robs him of many a privilege, and must necessarily curtail his means of doing good. But even under this calamity Dr. Etheridge did not murmur. His was a spirit of holy

resignation to the will of God, and the language of his heart always was, "Father, thy will be done."

His friend the Rev. George Leale, now of Alderney, has favoured me with several letters, one of which I here insert.

HAYLE, CORNWALL, *May 17th*, 1854.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

You and I correspond too little, the fault being on my side ; not, indeed, from want of love to you, but from want of time, or from indolence when I have it. But I know you will interpret my silence in the most tolerant manner. Do let me have another letter, telling me all about the islands—those spots so associated with all pleasant and peaceful memories in my mind. It always gives my daughter, as well as myself, a pleasure to see a letter from you. She, poor dear, is in a most delicate state of health ; on account of which, and led, I trust, by the blessed providence of God, we came last Conference into this part of the country. I am, you know, stationed at Penzance, a very interesting circuit. I am now writing in the district meeting assembled at Hayle. We number thirty-seven preachers. This district, like most others, has been subject to difficulty and depression, but I believe the worst of it is over. The people are getting peaceful, and are disposed to mind the best things. I am appointed to preach this evening a funeral sermon for Dr. Newton before the District, a thing of which I am utterly unworthy. When you see them, will you pay my best respects to Mrs. Maculloch and Miss Le Pelly, to Mr. and Mrs. Hocart, and the Misses De Queteville? I should like right well to come to Guernsey again. Peace be with you, my dear friend ! Let

us be faithful, and fulfil as hirelings our day. Alas ! how much of it is gone, and, on my part, not improved so fully as it ought to have been ! Ah ! we have need to make our last appeal to Mercy. Yet you and I, after all, have, even in the review of the past, most solid reason to be thankful that we have not altogether lived in vain. Let us take hope, and labour on while the day yet endures, and at the time of the evening star it will be well with us.

With my kind regards to Mrs. Leale,

I am yours affectionately,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

His daughter—the fair lily which had grown up by his side and was the object of his deepest affection and his most tender care—was now withering away, and not even the genial air of Penzance could arrest the progress of disease for any considerable length of time. She was now twenty years of age, and of her father she was dotingly fond. She would haste to meet him on his return from a country appointment, sit by his easy-chair, and bending close to his ear on account of his deafness, tell him any pleasant incident which had occurred. The thought of losing her he could not bear. For a long time he had spoken of her as “delicate,” and when at length it became evident that he must part with her, he exclaimed in great agony, “O God, that I could die for her !” “She fancied one day when very

restless," says Miss Cooke, "that she would be better in an easy-chair belonging to my dear father, and the Doctor came with many apologies to ask the loan of it. Of course it was immediately sent, and though by the time of its arrival the restlessness under which she suffered was gone, the incident showed how her father watched over her and sought to realize even her slightest wish." Very peacefully she descended the banks of the valley of the shadow of death, and then, in the fall of the year 1854, calmly passed away. To him it was a painful stroke, perhaps the most painful he was ever called to endure. For a few weeks he was unable to preach, and his appointments were kindly provided for by Mr. Cooke. But after a while he went to him and said, "I must get to my work again, I will take my appointments as usual." At a social meeting he spoke a few words, throwing himself on the sympathies of the people. On the Sunday morning he took the pulpit in the large chapel at Penzance. When he quoted the words, "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the floods they shall not overflow thee," it seemed as if the effort would be too much for him ; but recovering himself, he said that he should address his congregation in the words of one no longer among them, and he read a little book translated from the French by Miss Etheridge, entitled, *The*

Advent of the Lord, founded on the words "Behold, He cometh with clouds," etc., Rev. i. 7. At the conclusion he referred to the translation, and said that he had no doubt, had health been hers, that she would have produced many others such. He then spoke of her spiritual life as that of one who had scarcely ever resisted the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit, but had from her earliest years closed in with his suggestions, and yielded herself to Christ.

To the memory of this "child of his love and of his hope," Dr. Etheridge dedicated his "*Jerusalem and Tiberias*," published two years after her death, "for whose instruction," he says, "some portions of this work were written; and who from a child had learned to read and love those inspired Hebrew Scriptures which were able to make her wise unto salvation, through faith in the Redeemer whom they reveal." After adverting to their value, in the preface to the work, he says :—

My daughter, who died in October, 1854, in her twentieth year, was my only surviving child. Bereaved of her dear mother at the tender age of six years, she was confided by Providence to my sole care, and it became the solace of my days to watch over and protect her welfare. I had the blessedness of seeing her rise into life, adorned with an almost ideal beauty of person, the graces of a cultivated intellect, and, above all, through the boundless mercy of God, with the virtues and sanctities of re-

ligion. She was at once my daughter and pupil, my companion in foreign travel, my fellow-student, and sympathising friend ; in a word, the angel of my life. But in proportion to the love I had learned to cherish for that saint was the anguish which bowed me down in desolation of heart when she vanished from my sight. Here, however, I refrain from obtruding on the attention of others any recital of a trial which has overshadowed my remaining days with a gloom which can only be dispelled by the light of another world. I will therefore hold my peace and wait. The decrees of the Most High will prove themselves unutterably wise and good. "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord !" Yet the yearnings of a father's heart may be forgiven if, in these circumstances, I cannot surmount the wish to unite her name with my own on these pages, that both may survive for a season in the recollections of some who have known us.

From Mrs. Ellis he received a letter full of such consolation as none but a Christian friend could give ; and in reply he wrote to her, giving utterance to his very deep sorrow. "The joy of parents in their children," says a celebrated German writer, "is the most holy joy of humanity ;" and we cannot, therefore, wonder that Dr. Etheridge, when the joy he experienced in his daughter was gone, should express himself in terms like these :—

PENZANCE, *Feb. 22nd*, 1855.

DEAR MRS. ELLIS,

How shall I apologise to you for my long delay in acknowledging your last most seasonable letter ? The fact is, the

subject of it excites such agony in me that I have hitherto shrunk from writing about it, even to my own relations. Even now it becomes so excruciating that I feel I am not equal to the task. Enough ! Every day brings nearer the re-union. What consolation in the thought that we are not, with the lapse of time, drifting farther from them, but are rapidly approaching them again, no more to be separated !

My daughter fell asleep in Jesus, and I solemnly believe she will be one of those whom "God will bring with Him." She was a simple-hearted believer in Him ; confessed Him, communed with Him, tried to obey Him, and died depending on His promises. She was my companion in the study of His Word. I taught her to read it in the original tongues ; and among our studies I shall never forget the interest she took in reading with me the book of Daniel the prophet. That lesson laid the basis of a tolerably correct knowledge of the unfulfilled prophecies. She, with myself, entered fully into the faith of the approaching advent, and the first resurrection, about which we conversed together a few hours before her departure.

Oh, my poor broken heart !

The news of your dear father's departure made a profound impression on me. Ah ! I fear there are but few who are what he was, when I had the privilege of his society, and what he was to the last. May I be but permitted even to see him again : but I feel that this must be by grace indeed. I was thankful to learn how well Mrs. Elliott bore up under the sorrows of such a separation. "The peace of God, which passeth understanding," ever keep her heart and mind !

For myself, let me but fulfil the tasks of life which remain, and I shall welcome with joy the divine permission to enter that

wondrous world where the inhabitants are all holy. Blessed be the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath begotten us to such a hope !

To my honoured friend Mr. Ellis I beg to be remembered with a true-hearted love. May all grace and benediction, my dear sister, be given to you both, and to your children ! So prays,

Yours affectionately,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

The remains of this loved one were interred in the church-yard at Gulval, near Penzance, and the bereaved father often went to the spot to weep there. On one occasion he was observed by a friend, who saw him standing by it for some time apparently wrapped in deep thought and meditation. He then turned away from the spot, and his friend overheard him saying, "Glorious immortality ! Glorious immortality !"

This incident speaks volumes. It tells us of his hope of a re-union in a brighter sphere, and it explains how, with his deep and poignant sorrow, there was mingled the most perfect resignation to the will of God. It is only this "glorious immortality" which explains the mystery of the early removal from earth of many a lovely and promising child whose existence here was too brief for the expansion of its powers. Wordsworth says :--

Look at the fate of summer flowers,
Which blow at daybreak, droop ere even-song ;
And, grieved for this brief date, confess that ours,
Measured by what we are and ought to be,
Measured by all that, trembling, we foresee,
Is not so long !

If human life do pass away,
Perishing more swiftly than the flower,
If we are creatures of a *winter's* day,
What space hath virgin's beauty to disclose
Her sweets, and triumph o'er the breathing rose ?
Not e'en an hour !

A gloomy thought this, were it not for that "glorious
immortality ;" but there, in the brighter world to which the
loved one was removed, she will be clothed in

Hues more exalted, "a refined form,"
That dreads not age, nor suffers from the worm,
And never dies.

Let the Christian parent, who has lost a promising and
much loved child, be assured that that child is not lost, that
it was wanted in a higher sphere, that there its powers will
be developed and its gifts enlarged ; and let him stand
by its grave with holy hope, and say, with Dr. Etheridge,
"Glorious immortality !"

In the month of October, 1855, Dr. Etheridge took a

fortnight's holiday, which he greatly needed, and to which he certainly had a right. Most Methodist ministers work throughout the year with great diligence, and only get a little relaxation from their Circuit duties by attending the Annual Conference, which proves, however, to the majority of them, a change of work equally as laborious as that which they have temporarily laid aside. Dr. Etheridge seldom attended the Conference, for his deafness prevented him from hearing its conversations, and therefore from taking any part in its debates. Was his holiday, then, strictly one? On the contrary, he went to Oxford, and there worked in the Bodleian library among its unrivalled collection of Hebrew books. To this incident he alludes in the following letter to Mrs. Ellis, written after his return to Penzance.

PENZANCE, *Nov. 14th*, 1855.

DEAR MRS. ELLIS,

Your handsome volume arrived safely last night, and I promise myself, from the survey already taken of the contents, both edification and refreshment in reading it through. I look at it with no small pleasure, be assured, and with a thorough feeling of the need there is of the admonition which all it relates is designed to point and enforce. I shall not omit the duty of drawing people's attention to it in this and in other neighbourhoods. Alas ! even in this remote and comparatively primitive place the foolish practice, or rather vice, of which you speak in your letter, is making way in some of our religious families.

You have done a good work. I only wish you had given your name in full. The excellent preface of Mr. Elliott will, of course, give a certain weight to the book. A clergyman, however, says all these good things professionally. What the world wants beside is the force of example. Now, you give the latter, and I wish it had the more complete demonstration of your name. Your position in society, and your own Christian character, would give the work, were they known to all your readers, a tenfold influence. May the Divine blessing be upon the book, and on her who wrote it !

But what shall I write on your sore bereavement ? To say that I sympathise with you is to say what I know you will believe ; I do indeed, and earnestly pray that both you and Mr. Ellis may find that effectual grace which will enable you not only to submit to the Will Supreme, but to submit even with joyfulness. I have found the need of this in my own affliction ; and especially the need of stronger faith, that divinely-created faith which is the substantial conviction of things unseen. And when I have been somewhat strengthened in this, then I have been enabled to rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, though still often bowed down in tears. I do yearn so after her. However, every day lessens the interval, and we shall meet them again.

Meantime we have to acquit ourselves of life's remaining duties, and, for my own part, I am thankful to be able to labour. It is a refuge. I take increasing delight in the work of the evangelist, and, ever since Eliza's departure, have been consuming almost every leisure hour in finishing a book which has cost me indeed more than seven years' hard study. I hope to send it to the press in about a month, with some such title as

"Jerusalem and Tiberias ; Sora and Cordova : or, A View of the Scholastic and Religious Learning of the Jews : designed as an Introduction to Rabbinical Literature." It will be in one volume of about 500 pages.

Having had no recess from circuit work for two years, I last month took a fortnight's holiday, and made a pilgrimage to Oxford, and worked in the Bodleian among the unrivalled collection of Hebrew books with which that library is stored. My honoured friend Professor Sewell sent me a letter of introduction to the librarian, which procured me every convenience. Mr. Sewell is warden of St. Peter's College, near Oxford, where I spent one of the Sundays, and received the Sacrament from him, along with the fellows of the college, in their chapel. They are high Tractarians, but nevertheless sincere servants of God ; and I have learned to revere and love a good man wherever I find him.

Have you seen Dr. Cumming's book on "The End"? I agree with him in most things in it, but not in his making the "new heavens and earth" a characteristic of the millennium. The physical renovation of our planet will not transpire till the end of what we call time ; but I fully believe that the present Gentile dispensation is hastening to its close, and my whole soul goes forth in the prayer, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus !"

Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, who hath loved us and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and establish you both, and your dear mother, and your children, in every good word and work !

So prays your affectionate brother,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

The foolish practice to which Dr. Etheridge adverts in this letter was, I believe, that of dancing ; and I am informed that some families in his congregation at Penzance, not strictly Methodists, having introduced it among the young people, he preached a sermon on the subject one Sunday morning, in which he denounced the vice, as he did not hesitate to call it, in very plain and forcible terms. The effect was beneficial, and though some were probably offended, others acknowledged that the preacher had uttered words which were both faithful and true.

The catholicity of Dr. Etheridge's spirit breathes out frequently in his letters and writings, and here we find him acknowledging the Tractarians as sincere servants of God, and kneeling with them in the college chapel at the sacramental table of the Lord. The wonder is, that as he was not a churchman they admitted him to the ordinance ; but he was held in high esteem by several in Oxford, both as a scholar and as a Christian, and doubtless Professor Sewell and others would rather rejoice to meet him at the Eucharistic feast.

From this letter it also appears that whilst agreeing with Dr. Cumming in most things advanced in his book entitled "The End," he did not agree with him in making the "new heavens and the new earth" a characteristic of the millennium.

He did, however, believe in the physical renovation of our planet at the end of time ; and in this I perfectly coincide. This earth is not doomed to be annihilated, but to be purified by fire, and to be transformed into a new and paradisiacal world, which will be one of the abodes, at least, of Christ's redeemed. What else can be the meaning of 2 Peter iii. 11—13; and of Rev. xxi. 1—4? Such was the view entertained by the late Stanley Faber, and unfolded in his work entitled "The Many Mansions in the House of the Father;" and if we cannot accord with all his speculations in that work, yet in the conclusion, that this earth is to be the particular mansion allotted to the redeemed human race, many will agree, and the prospect of re-inhabiting our present home when it has been renewed by the wonder-working power of God is one which some minds, like that of Faber, will dwell with satisfaction and delight.

CHAPTER VI.

Renewed Labours.

A CELEBRATED philosopher once proposed that a lofty column should be reared, and on it an inscription placed, "*To the great consolator, Time.*" Time, however, is no agent, and it is a consolator only because the lapse of it causes men to forget their sorrows ; so that, though for awhile they appear to be smitten down by the sad calamities of life beyond the possibility of recovery, yet, ere long, they again rally, and give themselves to new toils and conquests in the battle they are called to wage.

But there is a better consolator than time, namely, Christian work. No wiser course can a servant of God, who has been called to pass through deep waters, adopt, than to set himself, as soon as possible, to some holy and useful occupation under the eye of the Great Master, and so prevent, as in all probability he will, a morbid spirit of melancholy and dejection from seizing him as its prey.

This Dr. Etheridge well knew ; and therefore, instead of brooding over his painful loss, he buckled on the armour afresh, and, as we have already seen, soon resumed his pulpit labours with his wonted earnestness and zeal. But his sermons now became still more solemn and impressive. He preached frequently about the world of spirits. He dwelt on themes which indicated that his own mind was often lifted above the things of sense and time. And he rejoiced still more in the gracious manifestations of the divine presence, with which he was often favoured whilst dispensing the bread of life.

When a Christian people esteem their pastor very highly in love for his work's sake, they will not be disposed to find fault with him for his idiosyncracies ; and even if he should make a mistake sometimes, they will not magnify it, or talk much about it, but will pass it by with a generous magnanimity. There is in most Methodist congregations a very strong prejudice against the wearing of a gown in the pulpit ; but one Sunday morning the doctor appeared in the pulpit at Penzance arrayed in that very graceful appendage. During the day some one said to him, " Doctor, do you know that you preached in your gown this morning ? " " Oh ! " he replied, very innocently ; " I felt rather cold when in the study, and wanted an extra garment to keep me warm, so, as it was

near me, I put it on." It is probable that he intended to put it off before leaving the room, but forgot to do so ; but so much was he beloved that no one said another word.

From Penzance, June 19th, 1856, he wrote to the Rev. G. Leale as follows :—

MY DEAR FRIEND,

My thanks are due to you for two letters which, like all yours, administered refreshment, and cherished in my mind those kindly feelings which still live in us both, in spite of all the changes and decays of time. I have not written before this on account of the pressure that has been upon me in preparing a book for the press, the writing of which and correcting the proof-sheets have absorbed every hour of time I could spare from other duties. But now the last sheet is in the printer's hands, and I shall have more leisure. The book is a survey of the literature of the Jews, and has cost me an immense deal of labour.

We shall each of us soon have to pack up again. So you are going back to the old circuit ; and very pleasant it would be to me to be stationed with you in the English department of Guernsey, among dear old friends. I have made an engagement with one of my own old circuits in this county, Falmouth, to labour there next year, please the Lord. May our goings be ordered according to His will, and our remaining days be entirely spent in His service ! I am not going to Conference, though so near ; as my governor is Chairman of the district, and both of us cannot leave the circuit.

In the returns of members we shall look better this year, and I trust that each succeeding one will show that the labour of the Lord's servants is no longer in vain. The time is fast approaching when He Himself will arise to work His great work in the earth. In the latter part of the book I have referred to, I have shown what the prophetic word reveals to us on that subject. Meanwhile it is for us to labour, with all our might, for the present salvation of those who hear us.

Can you tell me any news of our friend, Mr. Toase? I often wonder how he is getting on, and am always delighted to see anything from him or about him in the *Watchman*.

I hope your nephew will be guided by the good providence of heaven at this important epoch of his life, and that he will be made an ornament to the profession of a teacher, whether in the school or in the pulpit.

I beg my best regards to Madame Leale, whom I ever remember with Christian and brotherly regards. Wishing you both every benediction, I am, my dear Leale,

Yours affectionately,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

The work here mentioned, and to which reference has already been made, was published soon after the above date, and attracted very considerable attention in the world of letters. Among many flattering notices of it, was one in an American review, which said, "Dr. Etheridge is by birth a Hebrew of the Hebrews, but in spirit and in faith is now a Christian of the Christians, and in the purity and beauty

of his style an Englishman of the Englishmen." He was amused at this mistake relative to his birth, as he was respecting the one we named before, as to his connection with the Church of England. The American's error probably arose from a notion that no one but a Hebrew could possess so deep and profound an acquaintance with Hebrew literature as that displayed by the author of this book. It is certainly a very remarkable production, and perhaps the most valuable of Dr. Etheridge's works in that line of literature. It ought to have obtained a very wide circulation: that it did not is an evidence of the little interest which is taken, even by Christian ministers, in studies of this kind; and proves that the real value of books is not always to be estimated by their general sale.*

There are two subjects on which Dr. Etheridge dwells in this volume to which I cannot but advert. The first is the value of the Talmud, which has recently been lauded very highly by a Jewish writer in the *Quarterly Review*, to the surprise and grief of many of its readers. The reference is to the Babylonian Talmud, which the writer maintains is of very high antiquity, originating soon after the return of the Jews from Babylon, though not reduced to

* See the remarks of Dr. Hoole on this work, Chapter viii.

writing until eight hundred years later. He extols the work beyond measure, and maintains that the teachings of Christianity are derived from it, and are not therefore original. Indeed, the article is anti-christian, and has been accepted by sceptics as a new method of opposing the claims of the New Testament.

Now what is Dr. Etheridge's opinion of the Talmud? "The fact is," he says, "that great encyclopædia of Hebrew wisdom teems with error. In almost every department of science, in natural history, in chronology, genealogy, logic, and morals, falsehood and mistake are mixed up with truth upon its pages. Notwithstanding, with all its imperfections, it is a useful book, an attestation of the past, a criterion of progress already attained, and a prophecy of the future. It is a witness, too, of the lengths of folly to which the mind of man may drift when he disdains the wisdom of God as revealed in the Gospel ; and in these respects it will always have a claim on the attention of the wise. When Talmudism, as a religious system, shall, in a generation or two, have passed away, the Talmud itself will be still resorted to as a treasury of things amusing and things profitable ; a deep cavern of antiquity, where he who carries the necessary torch will not fail to find, amid whole labyrinths of the rubbish of times gone by, those inestimable lessons that

will be true for all times to come, and gems of ethical and poetic thought which retain their brightness for ever.

That this is a true estimate of the value of the Talmud there can be no doubt ;* and a writer in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* for February, 1868, in expressing a hope that Hebrew studies may revive again, says :—

The golden little book of the late Dr. Etheridge, entitled "Jerusalem and Tiberias, Sora and Cordova," or, more briefly, "Hebrew Literature," is a full and trustworthy manual, open to the youngest beginners, but useful to the more advanced reader of volumes long unintelligible, that will now, as we expect, rise in value in the market, in answer to a new demand, and be treated with a firm yet discriminating criticism.

The other subject referred to, on which Dr. Etheridge dwells in this volume, is the condition and prospects of God's ancient people, the Jews. His studies in Hebrew literature naturally led him to sympathize deeply with the sons of Abraham ; and, whilst he laments their separation from the fold of Christ, he expresses a strong hope that many of them will be saved "through the merit and intercession of the Redeemer, the efficacy of whose atoning

* Compare an article in the *Journal of Sacred Literature* for January, 1868—"The Talmud."

death pervades all time, and sheds its mercies over all the families of the earth." Dr. Etheridge was, in a certain sense, a millenarian. His views on this subject may be summed up in the following particulars. He believed (1) that the Jews will return to the land of Palestine before their conversion to Christianity ; (2) that they will re-erect the City and Temple of Jerusalem ; (3) that Jerusalem will become the seat of a horrible war, during which a divine intervention will take place on their behalf ; (4) that Christ will then appear in the expanse, when the first resurrection will take place, and living believers will be changed, who will return with Him to the mansions He has gone to prepare for them ; (5) that "the vengeful thunders of the judgment-time will purify the moral atmosphere, and usher in a cloudless Sabbath. The benedictions of religion and knowledge, liberty and peace, will bring repose and joy to the palace, and endow with their treasures all the families of the earth. Among the prophetic people, to whose destiny we are now more immediately referring, a great renovation will now begin to be developed. The Divine intervention on their behalf in the Epiphany of the Messiah will be the cause of their simultaneous conversion to Himself ; for in their Deliverer they will see Him whom their fathers crucified." (6) That the Hebrew people will become

effective witnesses of Christ to the world, and that their evangelistic efforts will be productive of a grand regeneration of the Gentile nations of the earth.

Views somewhat similar to these were held by the father of the Wesleys ; and, from several of his hymns, we should infer that they were also entertained by Charles Wesley, the poet of Methodism. But did John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, hold them? Mr. Tyerman, in his recent *Life of that eminent man*,* shows that to some extent he did, inasmuch as he expressed his approval of the singular book by Mr. Hartley, entitled "*Paradise Restored*," in which they are zealously maintained. Yet, happily, there is no allusion to them in his sermon on the general spread of the Gospel, nor in any of the works which Methodism accepts as its standards of Christian doctrine. I say happily, for had it been otherwise Methodism might have become a somewhat different system from what it is. Such a man as Dr. Etheridge might hold pre-millenarian views without much danger ; but had they been adopted by us as a Christian Church they would probably have been pushed by some to their utmost limits, and our pulpits would, I fear, have sometimes told a story, as to the efficiency of the

* Vol. II., pp. 523, 524.

Gospel to convert the world, different from that which they generally proclaim.

But were the sentiments of Dr. Etheridge on this subject embraced by many of his hearers? Mr. Garland's testimony is, that, highly interesting as he made them, they were not. "There was, however," he observes, "one of our members who had entered heart and soul into the pre-millennial views a long time before. She had been, for no less than seventeen years, bedridden with a spinal affection, and was a wonderful instance of patient resignation under great and protracted suffering. What had first led her to adopt these views I cannot state, but she was so thoroughly wedded to them that, though beyond doubt spiritually-minded, she seemed to have small relish for any conversation which did not bear upon the one subject of Christ's personal reign. She was daily living, if not in the firm persuasion, yet with something very nearly approaching to it, that she should never see death,—that the summons would soon come, at the sound of which she would be caught up to meet her descending Lord in the air, and be for ever with Him. To her the visits of Dr. Etheridge afforded the highest gratification. To have him sitting by her bedside, and discoursing of things to come, was a pleasure which put to flight all her weariness and pain. As

a member of my own class, I had frequent occasion to see her ; but, though I was always courteously received, I found that my inability to appreciate the doctrine she so much gloried in, and of the truth of which she vainly strove to convince me, set me rather at a discount with her. She has been many years dead."

After the Conference of 1856, Dr. Etheridge removed to Penryn, in the Falmouth Circuit, where his former friends and others gave him a very cordial and affectionate reception. It is pleasant when a minister can return to an earlier field of labour with the full consent of the people ; for, though even in the course of a very few years great changes will have taken place, and he will miss one here and another there whom he formerly loved as members of his flock, yet he will find others ripening perhaps into mature piety, who were brought to Christ through his ministrations of the word of life ; and thus he will be something like the husbandman who has planted a garden, sown in it some precious seeds, and then left it for awhile in the care of others, but who by-and-by comes back to find that much of the seed has taken root, and is now presenting itself in lovely flowers and luscious fruit, so that it is manifest his labour was not lost.

In November he wrote from St. Mawes, whither he had

gone to preach the anniversary sermons for the chapel, to his friend the Rev. Corbett Cooke, then stationed in Guernsey, as follows :—

I find Methodist affairs in the Falmouth circuit in a solid and comfortable state. All is quiet, and the congregations are very good. There is no movement, however, which promises at present an increase, and the old members are dying off. This makes me anxious to see a stir among the people. But in Cornwall they seem only to move in the mass. I think this betrays an infirmity of character ; they lean one upon another and no one seems to possess sufficient independency of mind to act solely upon his personal convictions, and separately to come out of the world, and unite himself to the people of God. In consequence of this state of character many good convictions are stifled in their minds, and our labour, for a long time together, is in vain. Yet, we must labour on in hope. The scale of work in the Falmouth circuit is very hard. I preach seven times a week, three weeks together, and eight times on the fourth. The journeys, too, owing to the mountainous nature of the country, are exceedingly laborious. Hitherto my strength has held out, though I confess it is greatly tried. It would be greatly refreshed by evidences of success, though you would remind me that much time has not yet elapsed. Our friend Vigis is an agreeable man, and a good preacher. In his third year he seems as acceptable as ever. You have not seen Guernsey yet in the perfection of its beauty. Wait till the summer, and take a jaunt out to the Pancake House at the back of the island. You are still I perceive at Saumarer-street, which, if I remember rightly, is one of the best parts in the town.

There is no doubt that Dr. Etheridge here describes, in a few words, one of the great defects of the Cornish Methodists. They are in several respects a noble-minded people, full of zeal for Christian missions, and ardent in their attachment to the church of their fathers ; but they are impulsive and excitable, and that only in the mass, so that in seasons of revival they are all on fire, and everything must give way to revival services ; but then, when the excitement has subsided, they too often sink into a state of apathy ; and many who professed to experience the regenerating grace of God fall away and lose their first love. Not a few, like Dr. Etheridge, have mourned over this infirmity of the people in Cornwall ; and how it is to be remedied is a problem hard to solve. Against genuine revivals of religion, even if they are attended with excitement, I would not utter a single word ; for it is unquestionable that in Cornwall and in other parts of the land they have been productive of permanent results, over which none but the most prejudiced could fail to rejoice. But a better state of things is a progressive and continuous work of God, in which conversions are not the exception, but the rule, and in which the church is built up both by additions to its numbers, and by the growth of its spiritual life, from time to time. And surely it is God's will that this should be the

normal condition of every church in Christendom. The Holy Spirit is as willing to work with us at one time as at another; and though there are seasons when He visits different localities in a very special manner, yet, if we were always prepared to be co-workers with Him, we should see less, perhaps, of occasional excitement, and more of the silent but equally powerful operations of His grace.

Amid the arduous labours to which Dr. Etheridge here refers, he was "refreshed by evidences of success." It has been supposed by some that a man of such literary tastes as he would be unable to enter into the spirit of a revival, and especially of such a revival as the Cornish people like; but it was far otherwise. He rejoiced as much as any man in seeing penitents inquiring after God, and believers rejoicing in the consciousness of His pardoning love; and, though precluded by his deafness from taking so prominent a part in prayer-meetings as he otherwise would have done, yet to learn that sinners were being converted gave to him the highest pleasure, whilst to promote their conversion, and after it to build them up in knowledge and in holiness, was the chief delight of his soul.

At Falmouth, as elsewhere, the Doctor was ever willing to preach on behalf of any truly Christian object, even in chapels belonging to other denominations. On one occa-

sion, however, says Mr. Garland, he seemed to think that he had gone, in the love of his neighbours, a little too far. He had engaged to preach for a certain object in the chapel of the Bible Christians, when, on passing through the street, a day or two after making the appointment, his eye was caught by a placard announcing to the public that on such a Sunday the Rev. Dr. Etheridge would preach in the said chapel in the afternoon, and Mrs. — in the evening. This was too much for the Doctor's equanimity, and, though far from hastily allowing such an announcement to annul his promise, he would take no further step in the matter until he had fully laid before his colleagues the gravity of the situation in which he found himself. That he fulfilled the appointment, I have little doubt ; but the liberty thus taken was unwarrantable, and he might very justly have withdrawn his promise.

It was at this period of his life that Dr. Etheridge entered upon a new line of literary effort, and became the biographer of Dr. Adam Clarke. The Wesleyan Book Committee—and especially its late devoted steward, the Rev. John Mason—felt the necessity of possessing its own record of the exemplary life of the learned commentator ; and I have been informed, on the best authority, that Mr. Mason asked another minister, now occupying a very important position

in the Church, to undertake the task of preparing such a work as was required. That minister was compelled, for several reasons, to decline the honour, when one day the Rev. Thomas Jackson went to a meeting of the Book Committee, and said that he had dreamt that Dr. Etheridge was writing a Life of Dr. Adam Clarke. The idea was a happy one, and it was at once resolved that Dr. Etheridge should be written to on the subject. Whether he was contemplating such a work I do not know; but the result was the publication of a biography of which it is impossible to speak too highly. Other lives of Dr. Clarke exist, including his own autobiography; but this is *the* life of him which will go down to posterity, and will probably be read by thousands yet unborn. The book appeared early in the year 1858, and at the ensuing Conference the following resolution was unanimously adopted: "The very cordial thanks of the Conference are given to the Rev. Dr. Etheridge for the valuable service rendered in the preparation of his deeply interesting Life of the Rev. Dr. Clarke. The Conference record their high approval of the spirit, judgment, taste, and general ability which mark the work, and hail this addition to our denominational literature as a memorial at once just and beautiful, honourable to departed excellence, and faithful to the great cause which Dr. Clarke loved to serve."

Whilst engaged in the preparation of this work, Dr. Etheridge spent a fortnight in London, and lodged near the residence of the Rev. Dr. Hoole, that he might have ready access to some valuable MSS. at that time in Dr. Hoole's possession. It was in the month of May, 1857, and the Doctor had been invited to preach one of the sermons for the Wesleyan Missionary Society at Islington, in anticipation of which he wrote to Mrs. Ellis, saying: "My subject will be the coming and kingdom of our Lord Jesus. I am rather nervous, lest some of my brethren should not agree with me on one or two points; but I hope the sermon will lead to the examination of a branch of Biblical study too much neglected among us. I was never more convinced of the necessity of the Holy Spirit's teaching and grace than I am now. May He work His work of sovereign mercy in all our hearts!"

That sermon I had the privilege of hearing; and, had I dreamt of ever becoming Dr. E.'s biographer, I should doubtless have listened to it with the deeper interest. I could not *then* agree with him in all he said; for he dwelt on the pre-millenarian advent, or epiphany of Christ,—a view which, as I had before said, I should be glad to entertain if I could. But the discourse was a remarkable one, and was delivered in a most solemn and impressive manner.

Of a more popular character was his speech in Exeter Hall, at the annual meeting of the society. "Eloquence," says Pascal, "is the art of saying things in such a manner that, in the *first* place, those to whom we speak may hear them without pain and with pleasure; and, in the *second*, that they may feel interested in them, and be led by their own self-love to a more willing reflection on them." Though I did not hear this speech, yet, if I mistake not, it is an admirable specimen of such eloquence as is here described. It will be found at length in the *Wesleyan Missionary Notice* for May 25th, 1857; but I give here the closing paragraph, which is, I think, of great beauty. After referring to England's efforts to evangelize the world, to the extent of her trade, and to her influence among the nations of the earth, he said :—

Our character stands high. Our very name, sir, as every man who has travelled in other lands knows, is a talisman of power. An Englishman, who lives worthy of the name he bears, is regarded as a kind of noble among the human race. Our language becomes the common vehicle of speech, not only in our vast colonial and continental territories in the East, but among our friends and allies on the continent of Europe. It becomes evident every year, that the English will by-and-by be the common speech in the way of intercommunication amongst the peoples of the earth, and will very likely in due time

supplant many others. And, above all, Heaven has entrusted us with the pure truth of the Gospel : the GOSPEL, at whose voice the slave becomes free, the poor becomes rich, the savage, nursed in the lap of murder, becomes civilised for this life, and sanctified for another. England has this power in trust. Let her be faithful to the trust, and her name will be perpetual : let her be faithless to that trust, and we cannot guarantee her existence in her present character for half a century. The Prophet saw a gigantic image of the world-power with head of gold, and arms of silver, and thighs of iron, and feet of clay. Grandly this Herculean Colossus loomed upon his sight, with the appearance of a perpetuity as perfect as that of the everlasting hills. But there came an agency unseen and unexpected, at the touch of which the spectre of power began to waver, and to shudder, and to moulder into dust, and the whole form vanished from the sight as the chaff on the thrashing-floor disappears before the wind. This shows us that we ought not to be proud, but lowly ; not to be self-sufficient, but to ask, "Whence to me these works of mercy and displays of benevolence ?" England, the cause is thine :—

See, how unfettered are thy feet,
Thy way is plain o'er land and sea ;
Go, and in accents loud and sweet,
Tell what thy God hath done for thee.

Our time of agency is extremely limited, and we have the most impressive mementos that what we personally mean we must speedily do, and do it with all our might. I confess to you, with truth, that I have been powerfully moved this morning since entering this hall, after an absence of many years, when I looked

around in vain for the well-remembered forms of many eminent servants of God whom in former years I have been permitted to meet upon this platform, but whose faces are now vested in the shroud of death, and whose once-powerful tones are hushed in the silence of the grave. This *memento mori*, however, ought to stir up to new efforts. Now is our time. Their time was. It ended. Our time is. It passes. What they are, we shall be. "I visited," says a Hebrew poet of Spain, "I visited the scenes of former years. I stood on the spot where my forerunners and my friends reposed in death. I called, but no man answered. 'What ! then,' exclaimed I, 'have they all become untrue to me ?' Tongueless, they spoke. Motionless, they nevertheless arose, and pointed me to my place at their side." Yet, blessed be God, ours is not so lugubrious an association as that. The just men made perfect to whom I refer, and whose spirits ours will follow, beckon us not to a dusty grave, but to thrones like theirs in heaven. He who accomplished such works of mercy by their agency is now commissioning us to take their place—to fulfil, as they did, the great task of life, and the crown conferred on them becomes a matter of promise to ourselves.

The admirable biography of Dr. Clarke had been published but a short time when the Book Committee asked its author to write a similar life of the Rev. Dr. Coke; and, difficult as was the task, he cheerfully undertook it. He alludes to it in the following letters, the first of which was addressed to Miss Cooke, January 15th, 1859; and the second, a few months later, to his friend the Rev.

G. Leale. I deem extracts from these letters worthy of insertion, as illustrative of the generous and kindly spirit of the writer.

MY DEAR MISS COOKE,

I have been much obliged by your kind remembrance, both in the intimation you have given me respecting our dear friend, Mr. Toase, and for your elegant poem,* which must have given a charm to the bazaar for which you wrote it. I am delighted with it ; and am thankful to learn how successful the bazaar has been. The Methodists of Guernsey are an admirable people. May I beg your acceptance of a book which has been sent me by a foreign Jew, from which you may cull a few poetic flowers. The author, Philippson, is Rabbi of the Synagogue at Magdeburg, and a very able preacher. . . . I will write to Mr. Toase, having engaged to do what I can towards a biography of Dr. Coke. We have had a blessed revival in some of the villages of this circuit, and have received a hundred and fifty persons on trial. I have been invited to Truro next year, and also to Plymouth. Truro came first, so I took it.

In the Preface to the Life of Dr. Coke the name of the Rev. Wm. Toase appears among several others to whom the author expresses his grateful obligations. His correspondence with that venerable missionary would probably be of great interest, but it has not been preserved, and all we know is that Mr. Toase took a very deep interest in the biography

* A poem entitled "Amy's Dream."

which was now in preparation, and which he lived to see and read.

To the Rev. G. Leale he wrote as follows :—

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your acceptable present of the almanacs came safely, and I beg to return you my hearty thanks, with my devout salutations to yourself and Mrs. Leale. Years roll on, and the day of Eternity comes. The Lord be merciful to us and ours, and enable us to fill up the space that intervenes aright. We have had a gracious revival in this circuit during the last quarter, and have received more than a hundred and fifty persons, newly converted, on trial. I have been requested by the Book Committee to prepare a biography of Dr. Coke. Should you know of any letters of his, and could borrow them for me, I would make notes from them, and return them promptly.

The hopeful conversion of the one hundred and fifty persons gave him unspeakable joy. And well it might, for a minister's highest satisfaction must ever consist in the gathering in of sinners to the fold of Christ, and the building up of those who are already members of the church. He may be a man of refined literary tastes, and he may give (and if the talent has been entrusted to him, he ought to give) some portion of his time to literary pursuits. But they should ever hold a secondary place in his regards, and be only subsidiary to his greater work as an ambassador of

Jesus Christ. *His* business is to preach the Gospel ; nor ought he to allow any other occupation to interfere with this. That Dr. Etheridge did not, I am bold to say. He was a man of profound erudition, and he felt it a duty to give to the world the results of his studies in Hebrew literature ; but his highest joy was in preaching Christ crucified, and his greatest pleasure in seeing his people "walking in the truth." The fact is, he was a hard worker. He observed Mr. Wesley's rule : "Never while away time." His deafness shut him out from much society, but he was all the more alone in his study, where doubtless he often held very hallowed fellowship with God, and where he pondered over old and modern books, and wrote the works to which this memoir refers.

The following incident, given by Mrs. Ellis, is illustrative of his beautiful simplicity, and also of the fact that to be laid aside from preaching was to him a very great cross. "When very ill on one occasion, he came to stay with us ; and, from weakness and loss of blood, was more than usually depressed. I offered to read to him ; and after trying poetry and prose without any effect, I said, 'Would you like to hear a sermon ?' He assented, and from a note-book I read one on 'Why will ye die ?' preached by himself at Walworth Chapel many years previously, and of which I had taken

copious notes. He roused up ; expressed his interest ; admired this and that passage ; and, when I had finished, thanked me warmly for doing him so much good. ‘But who is the author?’ he asked. ‘Do you not know?’ was my reply. ‘Oh, no ! I never heard it before.’ Then I recalled the time and circumstances of its delivery ; when he was quite overwhelmed, thought it must have been improved in transcribing, and ended with hearty thanks to God who had permitted him then to proclaim His own truth, and an humble and inspired prayer that he might once again be raised up to enjoy that highest of all privileges.”

This visit to the hospitable domain of Mr. and Mrs. Ellis occurred at a somewhat earlier period than that of his residence in Penryn ; and “in the highest of all privileges” he was now fully engaged. How happy he was in the possession of it the following extracts from a letter to Mrs. Ellis will show, whilst they will also show the interest he took in the welfare of God’s ancient people, the Jews.

I heartily thank you both for your note, and the most acceptable little book you sent me—the very kind of work I was wanting, as I have the opportunity of reading it to many hundreds of young people. Your larger book on conformity to the world I have sometimes taken with me into the pulpit, chiefly for the purpose of making (I think it is) the ninth chapter a subject of discourse. Good has been done by it, and will be yet, to be

added to that amount of good which it is your highest object to lay humbly at the footstool of God's holy throne. . . For myself, I am dreadfully pressed for time. What with the labours of my circuit, and an inveterate tendency to authorship, I am always in a drive. We have had a blessed work in this circuit steadily through the winter, and have gathered in nearly two hundred converts of the right stamp, of all ages and conditions in life.

I have two works in hand, a Jewish one, and a biography of Dr. Coke, the last by appointment of the Methodist Book Committee. It will be about the size of the "Life of Dr. A. Clarke." In looking over some MS. letters of Coke's to-day I find he says, in one of them, that he had not had an hour to spare for the last seventeen years, and no day passed whose pressing duties he could meet. I am almost like him in that way, at all events. I have written only four chapters about him, having but recently begun the task. The other book I am transcribing from the first draft, all finished. The "Hebrew Literature" has never sold well. The Jews have been my best customers, and, from what I hear, speak well both of the book and of the author.

An American review says I am a Jew, though a converted one—a specimen of critical intellect. In this forthcoming volume (the two Targums on Genesis) there will be an introduction on the Messiah, which cannot but arrest their attention, because it exhibits the testimony of their own ancient writings to those expected characteristics of the Messiah which stand confessed in Jesus, and in Him alone. The Baroness Rothschild wrote for a "Hebrew Literature," told me that though she did not agree with everything said in it, yet that she admired the book, and wanted the copy to present to a friend. She enclosed a cheque

for £2. If I can do the least good among them, I should be for ever grateful. . . . You refer to the subject of prophecy. I am sorry it has but little attention among the Christians in this part of England. I preach occasionally on some of the great themes connected with our "Blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour;" but have generally found my congregations, even the best educated of them, at a loss to profit fully by the subjects, for want of a preparation in that elementary teaching which is so needful to the proper understanding of any particular topic of unfulfilled prophecy.

The fact that the Jews were interested in the "Hebrew Literature" is greatly to their credit, and must have been gratifying to its learned author. He did not write for pecuniary advantage, but to promote the cause of Biblical science, and to benefit his fellow-men, and though amongst "his own people" he met with little encouragement in this line of his labours, yet they were not lost, and it may be that their richest fruit will be gathered in a future day.

There is one chapter in the "Hebrew Literature" with which I can imagine its Jewish readers would be specially gratified. It has reference to Hebrew poetry, which, says the author, is a grand element in the character of that people. "Their history is a sublime epic of Providence; their very laws are brightly tinged with poetic beauty; their sacred oracles reveal the future of our common race in

magnificent poetic forms ; their inspired lyrics furnish the language for the worship of successive generations ; they afford a solace in the afflictive cares of life ; they hover on the lips of the dying ; they are destined to be sung by nations yet unborn, and to be the hymn-book of a regenerated world."

This remark he confines to the songs of the Hebrew Bible, to which, and especially to the Psalms, which he calls "a theophany in words, an embodiment of Divine inspiration," he was specially attached. In the "Generalia" are several lyrics founded on some of those wonderful productions, two of which I will here insert.

PSALM XIX.

The heavens declare the glory of God.

AT dead of night, hark to the sounding spheres !
 They loudly tell the glory of their God,
 And call the upwaking eye to lights and worlds
 Built in the vast, the limitless expanse.
 Tremendous choir ! mighty, yet sweet, their chant,
 Fresh uttered day and night, while time endures,
 And thund'ring to the peopled realms of earth
 A testament to man of truth divine.

Truth, that at morn shines in the solar beam,
 When in the orient heavens forth comes the sun,
 In golden beauty and majestic strength,

To tread the gorgeous archway of the skies.
Godlike, he pours his benefits on all :
The meanest cheers with his resplendent ray—
Illumines worlds, yet lights the humble vale.

But in Thy Word's blest oracles, O Lord,
We hear the voices of Thy deeper mind !
Thy perfect law turns from its hell-ward course
The erring soul, and bids it live to Thee.
Thy changeless seal is on its registry
Of truth, in which the men of upright heart
Do find the wisdom of eternal life.
Just Thy commandments, and the cause of joy
To holy beings, led by them aright.
On their rapt sight Thine ordinances shed
The light of everlasting sanctity.
Thy fear so pure, so cleansing, shall endure
With the immortal ages of the blest.
Precept and promise, all that comes from Thee,
Threatening and Law—are holy, just, and good.
More than the riches of remotest Ind,
I count their price, and to my soul more sweet
Than the ambrosial riches of the hive.
By them moreover is Thy servant warn'd,
And in obedience is his vast reward.
Oh, who can tell his dread amount of sin !
My Saviour, cleanse me from its inmost stain !
Keep me from crime deliberate, and defend
My helpless spirit from the powers of hell.
Then, saved from blackest guilt and fell despair,
It shall for evermore itself devote
In innocent oblation of pure thought,

And utterances of praise, to Thee, my Strength,
My glorious Redeemer, and my God.

J. W. E.

PSALM XC.

Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling-place.

THOU, Lord, hast been the home—rest of Thy saints,
In all their generations until now.
Life with its ceaseless changes, joys, complaints,
Rolls to the gulf of death, and high and low,
Mighty and mean, unto their doom do bow ;
But we who know Thee as our God, rejoice
In the unchanging treasures of Thy grace,
Thy favour is our heaven, Thy will our choice,
And in Thy presence blest, our endless dwelling-place.

And Thou alone hast Immortality.
Ere rose the hoary mountains, rock or hill,
And earth, or its foundations 'gan to be,
Or the Creation sprang to obey Thy will,
Thou wast, Self-bless'd, as Thou wilt be still,
When they have perish'd. In Thy dreadful sight
Gigantic trains of years are as a day
To those on earth long gone, or of the night,
A swiftly gliding watch, when it has passed away.

What then man's time on earth ! His num'rous race
Pass on their dreamy being, as the tide
Rolls forward to the ocean, and their place
Is soon found not. As when, at morning wide
The flowret spreads its beauties, which abide

But for a transient sun ; his seventy years
Outfly the winged shaft : if more remain,
Mid the last shadows of the vale of tears,
He droops in wintry gloom, and unrelenting pain.

Great GOD, we fall beneath Thy vengeful frown ;
Death, by Thy righteous sentence, is our doom !
From our first immortality cast down,
By evil blasted from the parent womb,
We hasten to the oblivion of the tomb !
The splendour of Thy look, from Thy near throne,
Falls full upon our sin, and in Thy sight
Its baneful essence and its forms are known,
And man, its victim, sinks enwrapped in deepest night.

But Thou wilt speak again, and from the dust
Call forth the long chang'd slumberers of the grave ;
The dead, new risen at Thy bar, most just,
Shall stand ; and He, who once their ransom gave
In His sacrificial blood, that He might save,
Now comes their Judge : shines on His brow the wreath
Of finished victory ! He bids them come,
And nations answer from the realms of death,
To find in heaven, or hell, their everlasting home.

For that dread hour we live. O teach us, Lord,
Our hearts with solemn diligence to apply,
Each day, unto the wisdom of Thy Word,
Which lights Thy people to their home on high.
Return, and save us now ! O satisfy
And gladden, in Thy mercy, all our days,
Each trembling breast with Thy paternal love ;

And all our powers shall celebrate Thy praise,
With saints redeemed on earth, and angel choirs above.

Display Thy saving work before the sight
Of Thy adoring servants, and dispel
From earth the horrors of the wide-spread night,
Brooding for ages, where the powers of hell
Hold rule ; and let the ransom'd nations swell
The empire of Thy Christ. Thou Light divine,
Beauty and glory of the Lord, appear !
On us and on our children's children shine,
Establish'd in Thy grace, devoted to Thy fear.

J. W. E.

CHAPTER VII.

Toils and Triumphs.

THE removal of a Christian minister from a field of labour in which he has been more than ordinarily successful is often a great trial both to himself and to his flock. No ties are more sacred than those which bind them together, and when the time comes that those ties must be unloosed, many hearts are sad, and many sincere regrets are expressed. Dr. Etheridge's second appointment to the Falmouth Circuit, after an interval of twenty years, had been attended with very happy results. His ministry had been blest to many; he had seen numerous additions to the church; and he had rejoiced over the conversion of many young people and others, whom he hoped to meet in a brighter and a happier sphere. His numerous friends were anxious to present him with some token of their regard, and the following resolution was adopted at a meeting held in Wesley Chapel, Falmouth, October 14th, 1859:—

That this meeting cannot advert to Dr. Etheridge's having been twice stationed in this circuit, without feeling thankful to the great Head of the Church, inasmuch as the Doctor, by his faithful preaching of the Gospel, his valuable lectures, and the truly Christian spirit constantly manifested by him, has, under the Divine blessing, rendered great service to the cause of religion ; it therefore asks him to accept a timepiece, not for its intrinsic value, but as a token of sincere regard, and of the high esteem in which he is held by the members of the society and friends in this circuit.

The presentation of the timepiece took place in the presence of a large assembly of friends, whom the Doctor addressed in nearly the following words* :—

Could you, my dear friends, look at this moment into my soul, you would discern in its deepest depths a sense of your kindness which neither life nor death can end. The undeserved act of munificence, which brings us together at the present time, is but one of a thousand nameless kindnesses which leave an indelible record on my heart, and have rendered me your grateful debtor for ever. Of the years of my active service in the Christian ministry, more than a third have been spent in this county, and five of them among yourselves. They were years of unremitting labour indeed, for which I bless God, but they were years of pleasantness and peace. Often, while traversing the beautiful localities of your circuit, and discharging the blessed duties of my ministry both in town and country, enjoying the

* The MS.. in his own handwriting, lies before me.

uninterrupted friendship of the people of God, have I felt something of what the royal Psalmist experienced when he sang, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, and leadeth me by the waters of peace." I can truly say that in no circuit have I found less to vex nor more to encourage me. I found a home in your homes, and in your family circles the place of a brother and a friend.

Above all, the hope that the labours of those years were not without those saving results which make this life better, and extend in ever heightening benefit to the life of the world to come,—all these memories call for gratitude, and encourage me still to labour and to hope.

As to this costly token of your goodness, I could not have presumed to look for anything of the kind, much less to form an expectation of a gift so truly precious. When you intimated your intention, it took me, I might almost say, painfully by surprise; painfully, because I felt my unworthiness. Had I been led to expect such an act of generosity, it would have been the ardent study of my days to render myself more worthy of it: but while I entertain an unavailing regret that so it is not, the feeling I cherish toward yourselves is a feeling of eternal gratitude.

The gift itself combines the ornamental with the useful. The timepiece—*A Memento of the Past*. The days which I spent among you are no more. They have vanished in that abyss of duration we call eternity; and such is the evanescence of our present life that but for some deep-traced record, some substantial and visible remembrance, the very memorial of our days is in danger of perishing with them. They are

Like odour fled as soon as shed,
Or morning's wingèd dream ;
Or light that never shines again,
Once glancing on the stream.

But here is the memento. When I look upon this timepiece those years will return ; I shall see your faces again, hear the tones of your voice, and go to the House of God in company. This timepiece will be also a *monitor for present duty*. Time flies. I shall see it whenever I look on the dial, and shall understand the appeal to diligence. Sir Walter Scott had upon his time-piece the two words from the Greek Testament, *Nux erchetai*,—"The night cometh." The work we have to do can only be done in the day of this life. On the transactions of the present depends the character of the eternal future. Moments stand for ages. Be wise, then ; number thy days ; and apply thy faculties to the needed task. *Carpe Diem*. Seize the opportunity of time—

Seize, mortal, seize the transcient hour,
Improve the moment as it flies ; -
Life's a short summer, man a flower,
He dies, alas ! so soon he dies !

It will also be a *beacon pointing to eternity*,—an eternity with its heaven or hell. Eternity, that tremendous duration, compared with which time with its moments, hours, days, weeks, months, years, olympiads, ages, and millenniums,—time with all its cycles—dwindles to a point and vanishes away. That we may stand like a holy army, clad in the panoply of truth, to prosecute our warfare against the powers of darkness, is my earnest prayer ; for then shall we find how sweeter than the ointment with

which Aaron was anointed, and how refreshing, as the dew that descended on Mount Hermon, it is to dwell together in unity.

The circuits which invited Dr. Etheridge to become their minister and pastor—Truro and Plymouth—did themselves great honour. Partly, no doubt, because of his deafness, but partly because his preaching was too good to be generally popular, he was not sought after by what are considered the first circuits in Methodism. As may be gathered from previous remarks, his sermons were of a high order, but not, perhaps, adapted to the masses. He did not deal much in appeals to the passions, nor did he send up rockets into the air which burst in beautiful showers over the people's heads, but then expired. As his manuscripts prove, and as many who sat under his ministry have testified, his discourses were full of thought, full of scriptural illustration, and therefore full of valuable instruction for all who listened to him attentively; yet, as Dr. Pearse and others have said, he was not generally appreciated by the Methodist churches. Cornwall, however, loved him, and in Cornwall he was content to stay.

After the Conference of 1859 he removed to Truro, one of the most charming and beautiful spots in that part of the far-west of England. Here he found himself at once in the midst of loving friends, and here again he

had the pleasure of witnessing a revival of the work of God. The following letter to the Rev. G. Leale speaks both of his literary and of his circuit work, and bears evidence of the depth of his Christian experience in the midst of his numerous and varied occupations.

TRURO, Feb. 21, 1860.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have long delayed the acknowledgment of your last kind lines, having been from day to day closely pressed in completing the volume which Mr. Mason is waiting for on the Memoirs of Dr. Coke. I have now got within a few pages of the end of the task, and shall be able to breathe a little. Having to meet all the duties of the circuit, as well as to do this and other writings, you will easily perceive I have not had an hour to spare. The Life of Dr. Coke will be of the same size as that of Clarke, and will be, I hope, a suitable companion to it.

Accept my hearty thanks for the almanacs. They are excellent works of the kind, especially the French one. I hope that nice little work has an extensive circulation in France.

I perceive that though your island-circuit is a quiet and sequestered one, you have an important sphere of duty in it. May the work of the Lord prosper in your hands. We have had a blessed influence on our people here, during the winter, with conversions to God in Truro almost every week. *Gloria Deo in excelsis!* These manifestations of the Holy Spirit, which have brought such multitudes to the knowledge of salvation, within the last eighteen months, in America, Ireland, Scotland, and England, are the preludes to greater and world-renewing effusions promised in the last days.

I suppose, if spared, you will be coming to the London Conference. I may meet you there ; but am uncertain, as I have to be away from the circuit a fortnight at Easter, on a missionary deputation to the north. To see your dear children rising into life in the hopeful way they are, must afford you and Mrs. Leale a most heartfelt consolation. May the Lord be their God in providence, grace, and glory ;—with you, and the partner of your days, and also, through His unbounded mercy, with

Your affectionate friend,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

His visit to the north, referred to in this letter, was to the Manchester and Bolton district ; and, as I was then residing in the latter of these towns, I had the pleasure of hearing him in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, and have not yet forgotten the impression which his speech produced on those who were fortunate enough to be near him ; for his voice was not of sufficient compass to fill that very spacious building, so that by many present he was scarcely heard. The speech was an outline of a chapter in his “*Life of Dr. Coke*,” entitled “*Outgoings of the Gospel*,” and it is as beautiful to read as it was to hear. On the following day I heard him again, in Bridge Street Chapel, Bolton, with equal pleasure ; for he delivered a very different speech, though in some respects quite as good. The next morning I took breakfast with him at the house of a friend, and

found him free, genial, and most communicative. Notwithstanding his deafness, we conversed on books, missions, and other subjects, for upwards of an hour; and from that day I felt for Dr. Etheridge the highest admiration as a Christian scholar and a minister of Jesus Christ. There are some men who are so conscious of their own superiority that lesser men can scarcely venture to approach them. It was not so with him. He was as approachable as a child, and it was a joy to listen to him as he spoke on the various topics to which our conversation led.

The "Life of Dr. Coke" appeared about this time, and was received with pleasure by many who previously knew little of that eminent missionary's career. The thanks of the Conference were given to the author for this volume also, and I find among his papers this memorandum :—

I extract, with a deep sense of unworthiness, the following from the *Watchman* of August 15th, 1860, on the report of proceedings of Conference. Mr. T. Jackson said : " I beg to move, which I do with great cordiality, that the thanks of the Conference be presented to Dr. Etheridge for the ability and success with which he has fulfilled a request of the London Book Committee, by his recent publication of the *Memoir of Dr. Coke*. I have unfeigned pleasure in proposing this resolution to the Conference on many grounds. To me it is a matter of great satisfaction that the admirable course and valuable labours of

Dr. Coke are now reviving in the minds of the Methodist preachers and people. A more useful man, next to the Wesleys, was never connected with Methodism, and a more sincere friend to the body of Methodist preachers never existed than Dr. Thomas Coke. He was a man whose name ought to be perpetually cherished in the Methodist Connexion, and I believe that it will be, now that his Life is published by Dr. Etheridge. It is an admirable companion to his Life of Dr. Clarke, and greatly enriches the literature of the Methodist Connexion. We owe to him a debt of gratitude for these admirable volumes." Dr. Hoole said, "that two of the most precious gifts of God to this Connexion were those mentioned in the resolution—Dr. Coke, and Dr. Etheridge—Dr. Coke for the work of missions, and Dr. Etheridge to write his Life."

"Dr. Hoole's remark," adds Dr. Etheridge, "is too exaggerated, however kind. *Deo soli gloria!*"

Many passages of great interest and beauty might be culled from this volume, but I will quote only the following. Dr. Coke had gone to Paris with M. De Queteville, a minister whom he had ordained with a view to his preaching in that city the word of life. A room was hired, and M. De Queteville preached to thirty-six persons.

It was then announced that the Rev. Dr. Coke, an English divine, of the University of Oxford, would read on the following day a lecture in French. At the time appointed a congregation mustered, consisting of six persons. Among the teeming multitudes who thronged the neighbourhood, and who had been

invited to hear the Gospel, scarcely one seemed to entertain a thought that could lead him to wish to respond to a call so "*ardûle*." So little, indeed, were they disposed to tolerate the presence of these "English divines," that their stay among them could only have been prolonged at the risk of life. I have heard Madame Hocart, the excellent daughter of M. De Queteville, say, that her father, in relating their adventure in Paris, used to tell how the people would warn them, that, if they did not take their departure in peace, they would hang them to the lamp-posts. Under these circumstances, Dr. Coke was obliged to conclude that the present was not the time to persist in the undertaking, but that it would be his duty to watch for a more favourable opening. By the kind offices of a friend who had some influence with the Commissioner, he was absolved from his engagement as purchaser of the old church, and deemed it best to return, without further loss of time, to the cultivation of fields which gave greater assurance of a harvest. For France, at that time, there was no hope. The people seemed utterly debased. Bad as French society may be at present, its condition in the last century was infinitely worse. Faith had perished, and moral principle lingered only in the bosoms of a few. The upper classes were, if possible, more corrupt than the populace. Such books as the *Memoirs of Langden*, and the curious pamphlet-literature of the times, which reveal iniquities that would never be conceived by the minds of ordinary sinners, give terrible proof of it. With incessant efforts to sustain a factitious gaiety, the people at large were without hope, because without God. "This Paris," says a man of the town, who wrote at the time, "the city of amusements and pleasures, where four-fifths of the inhabitants die of grief, and where the

friendship of the court itself has been the good faith of foxes and the society of wolves." Besides, the days then passing were days of judgment, because mercy had been rejected. What had been of late endured proved to be but the beginning of sorrows. The reign of terror was at hand, and while the black cloud uprose, the accents of grace died on the lips of the evangelist, and the angel of destruction spread his wings.

How slowly do great cities learn wisdom! Is the Paris of 1871 much better than the Paris of the last century? It has been besieged by a powerful foe, reduced to a state of famine, compelled to surrender, and to admit the enemy into its gates; yet it is now torn by a terrible faction, and is again on the verge of a reign of terror! Moreover, if the writings of some modern Frenchmen reflect the spirit and character of its population, its social condition is indeed lamentable, and how it is to be renovated no one can tell. Happy would it be for Paris if she would hear the rod, and who has appointed it, ere judgments still more terrible become her lot.

The chapter on Holy Orders, in the Life of Dr. Coke, embodies Dr. Etheridge's mature views on the subject, and is an admirable though condensed argument in proof of the validity of Presbyterian ordination. "Results show," is the conclusion of Dr. Etheridge, "that the act by which Ashbury and Coke were invested with the scriptural episcopate bears

the token of the solemn attestation of heaven, and the seal of the Everlasting King." Yes, the tens of thousands of devoted Methodists, who have been raised up in the United States of America, are witnesses to the fact that the ordination of these two eminent men by John Wesley was an ordination of which God approved ; and it will be difficult, I think, for any one to account for the present state of the Methodist churches in that part of the world on any other ground.

Good and willing workers generally find that their services are in much demand. The manner in which Dr. Etheridge had fulfilled his task in the production of the *Lives of Dr. Clarke and Dr. Coke*, led the Book Committee to enlist his services again, in reference to which he wrote to Mr. Leale as follows :—

PENZANCE, *May 14, 1861.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have never forgotten that I am a letter in debt to you since *having* the pleasure of receiving it, but my days have been so consumed with *engagements* as to oblige me reluctantly to delay returning you some lines. My circuit duties are uninterrupted, and the intervals of time that fall to me for recreation are filled up with incessant labours of the pen. Scarcely had I breathed from the toil of Dr. Coke's biography than our Book Committee were for setting me to work again. Mr. Mason wishes to bring out Watson's Theological Dictionary in a more

complete form, by adding a supplement of about three hundred columns, comprising articles adapted to the state of theological studies at the present time. The task of writing them they did me the honour of confiding to me. Whether right or wrong, I at last consented to do it. I have been at it some time, and a hard job I have found it, on account of the extensive reading and research required for the sake of accuracy. I hope to get through with it altogether in the course of the summer. In these habitual exercises of the study, pulpit, class-room, and so forth, my life passes with no great variety of incidents ; something in the same way as your own. But oh, *mon ami*, it is with both of us hastening onward. The consciousness of this gives me great concern to attain an entire sanctification ; and the promises of God in the Gospel become so much the more precious. He only can do it. Everything hangs on His will, and that will is revealed to be in our favour. Faithful is He who hath promised, who also will do it, in you and in me.

We are holding our district meeting here at Penzance, and have been just going over the numbers. In my own circuit we have an increase of 50, and 87 on trial. In the district an increase of 214, and 1,688 on trial. *Gloria Deo in excelsis!* I hope there is a general increase throughout the Connexion.

It was in this town that my daughter died six months ago. She was buried at Gulval, about two miles out of Penzance, in a spot where I hope at length to repose with her, and with her to awake at the first resurrection. Nothing is worth a thought but how I may attain that object. May the same felicity be yours. What a mercy, when those whom we love are like-minded with ourselves in this matter. For myself, nothing but such a hope, and the attention it excites to the things supreme, can assuage

those wounds which I feel bleeding afresh when I revisit these scenes.

Farewell. Please to give my Christian love to dear Mrs. Leale, and believe me,

Your affectionate brother,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

A reference to the Supplement to Watson's Dictionary will be found in the succeeding chapter by Dr. Hoole. I hope it will yet see the light, for that such extensive reading and research, as the author here speaks of, should be thrown away, would be indeed sad. But we see by this letter that even in the midst of his literary labours his soul was panting after God, and the saintliness of his character becoming daily more confirmed. His bereavements had left a sorrow which could never be entirely healed in this world, but he longed the more for the world in which he hoped to become more intimately united to his Lord. His words were—for I quote from a lyric somewhat unfinished :—

Most Holy ! Thou requir'st uprightness
In all who in Thy mercy trust ;
And such, to everlasting brightness
Thy grace uplifting from the dust,
Gives to possess
The highest wisdom of the just.

To Thee I rise, such bliss requiring,
Source divine of purity,
With humble confidence aspiring,
In my privileged degree,
In Thine image
Waking, to become like Thee.

In December, 1861, Dr. Etheridge received from Mrs. Ellis a beautiful little work from her own pen, entitled "Toils and Triumphs ; or, Missionary Work in the World's Dark Places,"—"the object of which is to make known some of the many stirring incidents and glorious triumphs of missionary life." It contains thrilling accounts of missions in Burmah, New Zealand, Fiji, and other parts of the world, and I am not surprised that the Doctor should speak of it in the terms he does. Writing to Mrs. Ellis he says :—

I feel greatly obliged by your kind remembrance of me in your most acceptable present of the volume on Missions. I had no sooner seen the advertisement of it than I was moved by a strong wish to have it, which has made the present the more welcome. I have been away on a journey, and have not been able to read it thoroughly as yet, but before going I got from it one anecdote, that of Morrison, who said that he expected God would overturn the idolatry of the Chinese. I recited the anecdote at a missionary meeting, when it was received with an applause that no other part of my speech commanded. While I paused to let the marks of their approbation subside, I thought

that, if this be the case, I shall go to that treasury again. And so I hope to do. There is scarcely a page in the book which is not available for the platform, and I believe your work in that respect, as in many others, will greatly aid the good cause.

I hope Mr. Ellis and yourself are well. May you be both spared to descend together into the vale of years, seeing in your own and your dear children's history the lovingkindness of the Lord. And I ever remain, dear Mrs. Ellis,

Most truly, and affectionately yours,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

The anecdote of Morrison was well worth relating : " He had gone to make final arrangements for his embarkation, and was about leaving the merchant's counting-house, when a giddy clerk, with an air of ill-suppressed ridicule, said, "And so, Mr. Morrison, *you* really expect that *you* will make an impression on the idolatry of the great Chinese empire?" "No, sir," said Morrison, with unusual solemnity; "*I expect God will.*" * Who can wonder that this story, told as Dr. Etheridge would tell it, should be received with applause? And how genuine is the simplicity of his remark, "While I paused to let the marks of their approbation subside, I thought that, if this be the case, I shall go to that treasury again." And doubtless he did so, and found it a very valuable treasury; for I am quite disposed to

* "Toils and Triumphs," p. 256.

endorse his opinion that "there is scarcely a page in the book which is not available for the platform." How rich we are in missionary literature! and how potent is its influence on the Church and on the age! I rejoice in the multiplication of such works as the above; and not the less so when they are written by Christian ladies, many of whom seem to possess a peculiar aptitude for telling missionary stories in a most touching and effective manner. Just as there is a peculiar touch in the hand of a female artist, so that a picture from her easel possesses an airiness which you do not find elsewhere, so is there something peculiar in the style of a Christian authoress, which is specially adapted to the production of works bearing on the toils and triumphs of missionary life.

After the Conference of 1863, Dr. Etheridge removed to the St. Austell Circuit, a district of East Cornwall, long celebrated for its tin mines, one of the most remarkable of which is the Carclaze mine, "a large open excavation of a mile in circuit, from twenty to thirty fathoms in depth." I find no reference in his letters to the physical features of the county. Physical science was not in his line, otherwise he would have seen in this, and in other parts of Cornwall, much to interest him; but he preferred to explore other strata than that in which the geologist delights.

Methodist preachers are called itinerants, or to use a Saxon phrase, *travelling* preachers, and such they are in more senses than one ; for they not only move, periodically, from circuit to circuit, but, as the word circuit implies, they go round and round a certain locality, and in some circuits that I know are almost perpetually on the wheels. Our predecessors of the last century made use of the horse and the saddle-bags, and though our lot has fallen upon times when the means of locomotion are far more convenient, yet there are circuits in Cornwall, and elsewhere, in which railways are of little service to the itinerant, and where he must *get on* as best he can, with such help as the worthy stewards may provide. So Dr. Etheridge found it at St. Austell. There were about five-and-twenty places on the plan, some of them at considerable distances from the place of his abode, and his health was now by no means vigorous, so that the work of the circuit was far too heavy for him. Yet he was cheerful and happy, and writing to his sister, Mrs. Bull, Dec. 26, 1863, he says :—

Hitherto has the Lord helped us, and His mercy is everlasting. He is my whole trust for time and for eternity. He keeps me in my going out and coming in. In my night journeys I have many instances of His merciful providence. One night last month I was coming over a mountain in a phaeton with my

colleague and a friend, and, on turning the summit, the powerful horse took fright, and ran at a shocking rate down the steep road till the carriage overturned and we were thrown out. He went forward, dragging the phaeton till it was broken to pieces, but we were unhurt ; this was mercy indeed. My work is heavy here, compared with some circuits, and I do not feel so young as in former years ; but it is my hope and desire to be able still to labour on.

But even at St. Austell he found time to prosecute his studies, and was busily occupied with his work on the Targums, to which he refers in a note addressed to Miss Cooke :—

I gather, from your kind and pleasant letter, that you are intending a new edition of the poems, and if you deem the few words of mine you quote to be worthy of the use you would apply them to, I shall consider it an honour for them to be so employed. I hope you will give us something in addition in the forthcoming collection, and that the flowers you are thus binding together will abide bright and fragrant. I often think of the days we spent in Penzance : we shall enjoy happier ones in heaven. Only think of good Mr. Toase. What a sublime end ! How honourable such a death ! Let mine be like his. At present I am not doing anything in the biographical line, being hard at work upon the Targums, which I hope to finish before the next Conference.

The Rev. W. Toase died suddenly, whilst conversing with a friend, on Sunday afternoon, Sept. 20th, 1863, in the eighty-

first year of his age, and the fifty-ninth of his ministry. On the morning of that day he had preached from 1 Tim. i. 5; and then he was permitted to lay down his body and his charge together, and to enter the heaven of eternal love, just after he had dwelt on love as the end of the commandments. It was, indeed, "a sublime end," but thus does God give many of His beloved sleep.

The first volume on the Targums was published in 1862, the second in 1865;* a work which was pronounced by a reviewer in the *Edinburgh* one of "the most valuable contributions to Jewish literature" which had recently appeared. The *Targums*, Targuma, *interpretatio* from Targem *exposuit*, were originally *viva voca* paraphrases of the Scriptures, given in the synagogue by the meturgemen, or interpreter, which soon took a written form; and these two volumes are a translation of the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel on the Pentateuch. The introduction contains a large amount of valuable information, supplementary to what is given in his former work, the "Introduction to Hebrew Literature." On the value of the word of God, the author says:—

"The Bible is for the world. The families of mankind

* Compare the remarks of Dr. Hoole, Chap. VIII.

have in it their common genealogical register, and the Divine charter of their common rights. The great principles of the moral government under which we live are here unfolded ; the laws which ensure the welfare of our social life, the truth that will correct our errors, the balsam that can heal our wounds, the redemption that has atoned for our guilt, and will at last abolish death, have here their sealed revelation. As in these discoveries every human being has an interest, reason, benevolence, and the mandate of the Spirit who speaks in the Word, all bind upon the Church the duty of giving the Bible to the nations of the earth, and as a matter of necessity for the attainment of this object, of translating it into their various languages."

Dr. Etheridge intended to have published a translation of the Targums on the Prophets, but this work he did not live to complete. He had received from Mrs. Ellis another of her beautiful works, entitled "Denmark and its Missions," and he wrote to her November 18th, 1863, saying :—

The Denmark came safely to hand a few days ago, and I am reading it with much profit and with a sacred pleasure. I gave your sketch of Carey last night at a missionary meeting, with a most delightful effect. Blessed be the God of your father, who has given you these talents, and grace to consecrate them to His holy service. And may His blessing be upon the book and upon the author of it. Along with my poor thanks I

send a copy of a work upon which I have spent, and am still employing, much of my leisure time. I had intended to wait till the completion of the second volume (on the Targums), now nearly finished, and then send you the entire work ; but I take the present occasion to ask of Mr. Ellis and yourself your kind acceptance of the first volume.

Again we see what good use he made of the volume sent him. The sketch of Carey,—how in a little village in Northamptonshire, some eighty years ago, might be seen over a shop door, a board with this inscription : “SECOND-HAND SHOES BOUGHT AND SOLD,—WILLIAM CAREY ;” and how this William Carey became a missionary in India, and how, when prevented by the East India Company from preaching in their territories, he went to the Danish settlement of Serampore, and there prosecuted his hallowed work,*—was well fitted for the purpose to which Dr. Etheridge applied it ; and the name of the “converted cobbler,” as he was sneeringly called by Sydney Smith, will not be forgotten in the future annals of the Church.

The Rev. Thomas Hardy, now of Oldham, was one of the Doctor's fellow-labourers during his last year at St. Austell, and from him I have received the following remarks :—

* “Denmark and its Missions,” p. 230, etc.

I feel it an honour to have dwelt that one year next door to so saintly a minister, and to have been associated with him in the same co-pastorate. He was one of the most spotless characters I ever knew—habitually devout, cheerful, and full of immortal hope—a pattern of the charity which “thinketh no evil.” While he was a lover of all good men, he was ardently attached to his own people, their institutions and the great work which God has wrought by them. His hearing had then so far failed that it was very difficult to converse with him, even with the help of a trumpet. He was thus shut out from much social intercourse that would have been congenial, but his sacred studies found him constant occupation, and never failing enjoyment. In fulfilling every appointment, however unfavourable the weather might be, he was most exemplary. Unable, one evening, owing to the dismal darkness, to find his way across the Downs to one of our country chapels, and reluctantly compelled to return home, he expressed his great concern for the omission, and volunteered another evening to the place which had been disappointed. After a week-evening service he would cheerfully walk home four, five, or even six miles—vehicles “gliding past him” (to use his own expression) unheard, yet he rarely ever sustained any injury. While thus ever ready for every good work, he was a most diligent student. Never “unemployed,” never “triflingly employed.” When he consented to preach out of his own circuit, which was seldom, he left home *late* on the Saturday, and returned early on the Monday. Amid slowly advancing physical decay, his mind retained all its native vigour and buoyancy. Much as he loved his study, he would cheerfully leave it when his duties as circuit missionary secretary required his attention—an office which his junior colleagues would gladly

have relieved him, had they been resident in the town. When meeting classes, though unable to hear a word that members said, he seemed to be furnished by a sort of intuition to give such instruction as was pertinent to each case.

On his last Sabbath evening at St. Austell he requested to be exempt from preaching, but though unable to hear he was a most devout worshipper in the congregation, and after the service assisted in the administration of the Lord's Supper with a seraphic fervour such as I shall never forget.

A letter addressed to his friend Mr. Leale, dated February 14, 1865, will illustrate some of Mr. Hardy's remarks in reference to the Doctor's anxiety respecting his appointments, and will also show how ardently he was longing after the heights of immortality.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

It gave me a cordial pleasure to receive another token of your kind remembrance, and especially to learn that you and Mrs. Leale continue so well. Though our work is very trying, you and I are by no means destroyed yet,—all thanks be to Him who giveth strength to the weak. We are each a monument of His mercy. I am often a wonder to myself, preaching as I do seven or eight times a week over a large extent of country. I have got through the winter, thus far, much better than I had feared. Once I was so beaten by a hurricane of wind and a deluge of rain as to be fairly vanquished, and obliged to return home without reaching my appointment; and this very evening

am the subject of another such a mortification. I set out an hour or so ago to go to a place over the high hills, or rather mountains, of that part of the country, but found the road so sheeted with ice as to be impracticable for walking upon without great danger. It was bad enough to get up hill, worse and more perilous to descend, and in the dark too. I was beaten once more, and obliged to give it up, with a resolution to go to them on the first available vacancy I have to supply this lack of service. I have a horror of disappointing even a small congregation, and nothing but physical necessity shall ever make me do it. Time also with us grows shorter every year, and our opportunities become more precious. But I hope you have many years before you ; each better than its predecessor. I feel a great and sweet desire to attain to real holiness, and the Gospel, which reveals the way, becomes more and more sacred and endeared to my soul. All the way, to the very heights of immortality, that word will hold to be true—"By grace ye are saved, through faith." May we live, here and hereafter, to be its witnesses.

If your dear nephew does not get the years allowed him immediately, he will, I hope, eventually, when he will have given in an able and faithful ministry proofs of his worthiness which his fathers and brethren will not be reluctant to acknowledge. I trust you and Mrs. Leale will find everlasting consolation in each of your beloved children. I am much obliged by the almanac. The anecdote about the little boy making the wooden plate I availed myself of on Sunday afternoon in preaching to a congregation of children. I was delighted with the effect it had upon them. I perceive the almanac is quite a treasure of good materials, which will be turned by me to

profitable account. If you were to translate some of them for the Miscellany, it would be a good service.

Farewell. The Lord keep, save, and bless you both, and with my best love, I remain,

Yours most truly,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

His sermons at this time, and for many years previously, were rich in thought, simple in style, and most impressive in effect. He did not aim at anything great and extraordinary, but adapted himself to the humblest capacities, so that it might be said of him, as of the great Master, that "the common people heard him gladly." As some of his letters intimate, he would occasionally take a book into the pulpit, and read from it a passage which had impressed his own mind; now and then he would introduce some telling anecdote; and not unfrequently he would quote some apt and beautiful lines from a favourite poet. He prepared his discourses with great care by writing a considerable outline; but the *memoriter* style, as we have already seen, he had abandoned, no doubt for the better on the whole. Among his MSS. is the outline of a sermon on *Home*, which, though it wants the finish that he would doubtless have given it had he intended it for the press, I nevertheless insert. It is founded on the words, "Come home," 1 Kings xiii. 7.

The theme of a sermon at one time overspreads a whole chapter of the Bible, and at another time an entire paragraph. Sometimes it is limited within the confines of a verse, and at others it is concentrated in a single word. Such is our text this evening. There is a word here which never fails to call up the purest feelings of the heart—a word which gathers around it the tenderest affections ;—it may be sorrowful regret, solemn anxieties, or consolatory hopes, in every man's bosom who is living the new life of a man. That word is Home,—the subject of our present meditation ; a subject in which every one of us has a concern, for there is no one without a home, as even the houseless wanderer and outcast has a home in himself.

1. We may affirm that a man's most intimate home is HIS OWN BOSOM. Everything should be comfortable there, or life will have no real happiness. When there is inward disquiet, a downy pillow, or a monarch's throne, is but a place of trouble ; for tranquillity in one's own soul can only be ensured by the presence of purity and peace. Where the bosom is tenanted by an unclean spirit, a proud spirit, a covetous or ambitious spirit, or an anxious, relentless, and turbulent spirit, rest is utterly unknown. David's prayer, therefore, was, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalms li. 10). The state of the heart gives the real tone to the life. Get the heart made right by the renewing Spirit of God, for the heart is the source of all our actions—the life and jury of our fate. Of all our friends it is the most faithful, of all our foes it is the most dire. Why are men such strangers to themselves but because they dread to look within ? They wander through the ages of the past, explore the recesses of the earth, and range among the words of the unwise, but are never at home, because

the usurping spirit of evil is allowed to hold possession, and the presence of the divine comfort is neither wished nor enjoyed. Leighton, in one of his exhortations, tells such people to pay themselves a visit now and then. And let them remember that if moral evil reigns in the heart, peace is a moral impossibility. Sin, when listened to as a seducer, becomes, by-and-by, an impeacher, and then an executioner. There is no peace to the wicked. The poet asks where is the place of happiness?—and then gives the true response—

No doubt 'tis in the human breast,
Where clamorous conscience is at rest,
Appeased by love divine,
Where peace sets up her snow-white throne,
And faith and hope are truly known,
And praise erects her shrine.

Blessed be God, it is our privilege to seek and find this ineffable consolation even now. Upon the contrite sinner who invites Him will the Spirit of grace descend to renew his heart in righteousness, and to make it the very home of love. And we in whom one spark of this holy fire has been enkindled should be bent, by watchful diligence and habitual prayer, on preserving and cherishing it till it burn with an inextinguishable flame. We must aspire to holiness, must seek the things that are above; must rise to that pure atmosphere of cloudless hope and love—that region of sanctified natures in which the soul, made free from the scourge and plague of spiritual disease, bathes in the sunshine of truth, becomes strong with the invigorating dew of immortality, and decks herself for the glory and majesty of that eternal Presence where there is fulness of joy, and where there

are pleasures for evermore. But he who is in subjection to the world, the flesh, and the devil, "does not dare that flight," but remains in the mire of the earth, grovels with the sordid, and becomes an outcast with the lost.

II. THE DOMESTIC HOME—THE FAMILY.—The spirit of peace which reigns in the individual mind of the Christian should and will diffuse its influence over the domestic circle. That home is blessed where the members of the family fear and love God. Family religion is the basis of public morality and virtue. If you know a man whose spirit, temper, example, conduct, and conversation make his family good and happy, you may trust him, and choose him as your friend. He will not betray your confidence, and his friendship will contribute to the true well-being of your life. But if you know a man whose temper, spirit, principles, and conduct tend to disquiet, pervert, and ruin his family—who denies the blood which flows in his veins, and uproots himself from the ground which has bred and cherished him ; in that man you can have no confidence. His mind is as black as treason, his heart as ugly as sin. Guilt and infamy follow close at his heels, and desolation spreads its dark cloud over his unhappy path.

But *all* the members of a family should feel the responsibility, and should strive, by orderly habits, religious rules, gentle words, and loving tempers, to make the hearth smile with cheerfulness, and the home the dwelling of peace. Happy the man who has a home like that. When the storm reigns without he has tranquillity within. When in the waves of life his hopes have become shipwrecked, he has remaining a home where a refreshing happiness will shed reviving influences upon his soul, and strengthen him for renewed efforts.

The Christian father, in training his children in Christian principles, fulfils the dignified vocation with which he has been entrusted, and fails not to reap the fruit of the divine blessing. Let parents, then, do their duty. Let them covet the encomium pronounced on Abraham, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." (Gen. xviii. 19.)

III. THE HOME OF THE CHURCH.—Of that blessed dwelling-place which is the habitation of God through the spirit, it should be our solemn and our earnest aspirations to be, not temporary, but abiding denizens. One thing should we desire of the Lord, and that should we seek after, that we may dwell in the House of the Lord all the days of our life, that we may behold the beauty of the Lord, and inquire in His temple. They who really have a dwelling in the home of the Church are members of the family of God, and are of the household of faith. They have received the adoption. They are children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. "For as many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believed in His name." (John i. 12.) This vital faith in Christ gives itself expression in the life. It leads a man to come out from the world and confess the Saviour before men. Christ's true disciples become an open confederation,—a Church visible to the world. The baptismal water is on their brow. They eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. In their several local communions they observe a godly discipline, and act together to keep themselves in the love of God and to promote His cause in the world. And Christ, their King, is with them. The Comforter abides. The Father of mercies is their God. This, then,

is what every one here is bound to do—to join the glorious company of the Apostles, the mighty fellowship of the Prophets, the noble army of Martyrs,—not to remain an alien, but to come near and to become a fellow-citizen of the Saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.

But some men who have a good feeling towards religion hesitate here. They have misgivings as to the inconveniences of becoming members of the Christian Church. They hear the groans of martyrs in the past, and the scornful laugh of the world in the present; and they would rather be excused from taking up their cross. Do they believe that Christ will excuse them, and save them at last, all the same? If so, then we who have done it need not to have done it in order to our salvation; or He has two measures with which to deal with men, one for us and a lighter one for them. Will *you* cherish this fatal error? An error you know it is; for He has but one measure, and requires obedience on the part of all to whom His will is made known, and who possess the power of fulfilling it. If your lot had been different, and cast where the Gospel is not known, you might have been with some who are struggling with sin without the knowledge of a Saviour, and whom the Saviour whom they knew not will nevertheless save for His mercy's sake. But as surely as he has made known to you His will, He expects you to obey it, or He will not hold you guiltless. He says, "My sheep hear My voice, and follow Me," but you stand aloof. He says, "Confess Me before men," and you will not. He says, "Come unto Me," and you keep away from Him. He says, "I am the door, by Me if any man enter in he shall be

saved," but you prefer remaining without. Know this, that He is proclaimed as the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him ; but not one word will you read here which gives encouragement to the hope of those who know His will and obey it not.

IV. Time leads to eternity. We are strangers here, and pilgrims, as all our fathers were. The hour comes when every one of us must quit the precincts of earth, and go—whither? Ah! what awaits you in that mysterious region—that land unknown? We must each go to A HOME IN ETERNITY ; but all men do not go to the same home. The call of the text, "Come home," will sound to each man from "his own place." Now here is the Christian's great consolation. He knows whither he goes, and the way he goes. He goes to friends who are waiting for him ; to a mansion prepared for him ; to a Saviour ready to receive him ; to a HOME IN HEAVEN. The children of God have an inheritance. Here they are being disciplined for its enjoyment ; then they will be put into possession. That is the Canaan of the true Israel of God, of which the earthly was but the type and pledge, and of which the paradise of Adam's garden was the picture, or sacramental emblem,—the Eden of delight, where seraphs gather immortality from life's fair tree, where golden joys for ever clustering grow, and momentary ages are no more. Then opens the temple where we shall hear the choirs of the seraphims, and see the King in His beauty. There are set thrones of power, the seats of monarchs whose kingdom passes not away. Let us then lift our hearts to those high joys for which we have been created, redeemed, and may be sanctified. Bend we our steps with the departing days of time to the goal, on reaching which we shall arrive at Home.

In these homes of devotion on earth let us be content on securing a full salvation, and thus our meetings on earth will be the pledge of a final meeting in heaven :—

When the dream of life is fled ;
When its wasted lamp is dead ;
When in cold oblivion's shade
Beauty, health, and power are laid ;
Where immortal spirits reign,
There, the saved, shall meet again.

There are some strong words here ; but nothing is stronger than truth ; and of truth—both doctrinal and practical—Dr. Etheridge was an unflinching advocate. The final home of which he speaks had for him many attractions. He looked forward to it as the state in which he would see the King in His beauty, and drink of the crystal waters of life ; but he also contemplated it as a place where he would recognise, and be united with, the loved ones who had gone before. Was he mistaken in entertaining this view ? In heaven they “neither marry nor are given in marriage,” but are “as the angels of God” ; but does this imply that the bonds of affection which Christians form on earth will have no perpetuity in the realms of bliss ? There is, I grant, a danger of cultivating a morbid wish to pry into the secrets of the future, and a certain class of books which profess to tell us more a great deal about the society and employments of

heaven than the Bible tells us, are very popular with some people, gratifying, as they do, a prurient curiosity on these subjects, and representing heaven as very much like this world, only purer and happier. On the other hand, there are those who are satisfied with the most vague notions respecting it possible; and, destitute, perhaps, of all imagination, are unable to conceive that the glowing descriptions given by St. John of the golden city can mean anything real; and, as for the reunion of sainted friends, and the reforming of interrupted associations,—well, they do not trouble themselves respecting them, and are not much concerned whether they will take place or no. David's expression, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me," they perhaps interpret as meaning that he would be buried in his child's grave; and Martha's hope that her brother Lazarus would rise again at the last day, and that he would be her brother still, as she evidently thought, was merely the fancy of her imaginative mind, albeit the Lord did not correct her and say that she was wrong. I give my readers credit for correcter views, and I trust they will pardon me for thus dwelling on a subject which cannot fail to be interesting to all. Dr. Etheridge, whatever else he looked for, anticipated the fellowship of the saints in the spirit-world, and firmly believed that with those he had lost for a time he would be reunited •

hereafter in sacred and indissoluble bonds. Not more real to Dante was his Beatrice than they were to him, though he saw them as yet but dimly and by faith. Hawthorne says that the turmoil of the world will always die away if we set our faces heavenward ; and, that Dr. Etheridge was climbing heavenwards I am sure from the tone of his correspondence and his preaching ; but his was no vain hope of heaven without a meetness for it, for, as his letters show, he was earnestly aspiring after holiness as the only robe in which he could be admitted into the presence-chamber of the King. Listen to the following strain, entitled—

KNOW'ST THOU THE LAND?

“ Kennst du das Land wo die Citronen blüher.”—GOETHE.

Know'st thou the land where peace eternal reigns ;
Where weary souls for ever lose their pains ;
The land to which the good, with bursting sighs,
Opprest by ills, uplift their prayerful eyes ?
Know'st thou it well ?—then, O my soul, each day,
Thither—yes, thither—press thy upward way.

Knows't thou the land ? the wanderer from afar
Is safely guided by its kindly star ;
His Saviour-God has pointed out the way—
Himself hath entered, that His followers may ;
Know'st thou it well ?—then, O my soul, thy vow
Thither to bend thy steps, remember now.

Know'st thou the land where an elysian rest
Awaits the just, with Christ for ever blest?
Here breaks the tempest, here the thunders roll,
There peace Sabbath calms the storm-beat soul;
Know'st thou it well?—then, toil-worn saint, aspire
Thither, yes, thither, with thy whole desire.

Know'st thou the land?—what though the final strife
Of death must quench in dust the body's life,
Fair Psyche spreads her wings, plum'd for the flight,
Which bears her, deathless, to the climes of light;
Know'st thou it well? 'tis freedom's glorious shrine,
And thither must thou rise to find it thine.

Know'st thou the land? 'tis there enrobed in light,
The Church enjoys the beatific sight;
The seraph sings, the saved in wonder fall
Low at His throne, and God is All in All;
Know'st thou? then learn to fit thee for thy home,
Thither, yes, thither, till He bids thee come.

J. W. E.

CHAPTER VIII.*

Hebrew Scholarship.

EVERY student of the Bible wishes to read the Old Testament in the original Hebrew, an object not difficult of accomplishment. A grammar little larger than a good-sized pamphlet, every word of which may be committed to memory, and a dictionary of two thousand words, are all that are required for commencement. The quartos of Parkhurst and Gesenius may then be consulted; but the student will hold himself independent of the speculations and fancies in which those lexicographers indulged. Then there is a whole library of authors in Latin, German, and French, not to mention those of England and America, which the student may not have time nor ability to read; but which were read by Dr. Etheridge with good effect. It would have been hard to find him unfurnished on any

* Contributed by the Rev. Elijah Hoole, D.D.

question in Hebrew literature. The works he published in this line of authorship were the following—

“HORÆ ARAMAICÆ,”

and

“THE APOSTOLICAL ACTS AND EPISTLES,”

From the Peschito, or Ancient Syriac.

The Syriac, or Aramaic, called in the New Testament “the Hebrew Tongue,” is a more difficult language than the Biblical Hebrew; but it presents attractions of no common character. The first translation of the New Testament from Greek was made into Syriac, which gives that version a standard value to the student. The Syriac is rich in liturgies of great antiquity, some of them compiled by men who attended the ministry of the Apostles or of the immediate successors of the Apostles, and preserving the very words of prayer and praise in which the early Hebrew Christians worshipped God. On these remains of antiquity Dr. Etheridge bestowed the pains of a scholar and a divine. Nowhere do we find more elegant composition than in the Introductions and Prefaces and Prologemena accompanying his renderings from the Syriac: his heart and soul were devoted to the work he had in hand. He has faithfully rendered the Syriac liturgies into English, and has given us a translation of the New Testament from the Syriac,

which the student may profitably compare with the authorised English version.

Take, as a specimen, Revelation xvi. 17—21; a passage which in the judgment of many persons is now in the course of fulfilment.

English Authorised Version.

And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices and thunders and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a

From the Syriac.

And the seventh angel poured his vial upon the air; and a great voice went forth from the temple, from the throne, saying,

IT IS DONE.

And there were lightnings and thunders and voices, and a great movement, such as was not since men were upon earth, as this movement so great. And the great city became three parts, and the city of the nations fell; and Babel the great was remembered before Aloha, to give to her the cup of the wine of the fury of His wrath. And every island fled, and the mountains were not found. And great hail, as of a talent (in weight) was from heaven upon men;

great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent : and men blasphemed God because of the plague of hail : for the plague thereof was exceeding great. and men blasphemed Aloha from the plague of hail, because the plague thereof was exceeding great.

We attach so much value to this part of the Doctor's great life-work, that we are induced to give a very able notice of the "Horæ Aramaicæ" from a well-known periodical of the day.

HORÆ ARAMAICÆ : comprising concise Notices of the Aramean Dialects in general, and of the Versions of Holy Scripture extant in them : with a translation of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, and of the Epistle to the Hebrews, from the ancient Peschito-Syriac. By J. W. ETHERIDGE. Royal 18mo. pp. 246. Mason.—As long as the Jews of Palestine held fast their national independence, the language of the country, the Hebrew, continued comparatively pure ; a few exotic words occasionally creeping in with foreign produce, arts, and inventions. In the days of Hezekiah the Hebrew dialect differed so much from the Babylonian-Aramaic, chiefly in pronunciation, that the latter sounded to the ears of the common people of Jerusalem altogether as a foreign tongue. (2 Kings xviii. 26.) The Babylonian-Aramaic is still frequently called the Chaldaic ; but Schlözer observes, very properly, Chaldaic language is quite an erroneous expression for the Aramaic or Babylonian. With the language of Babylon we are acquainted ; but the true Chaldaic, which probably was more intimately related to the Persic,

Median, Armenian, and Kurdic, nobody knows. After the invasion of Palestine by the Assyrian and Chaldaic rulers of Babylon, things were completely changed. The Palestine Jews, along with their political independence, lost the peculiar character of their language, which until then they had preserved. The Babylonian-Aramaic dialect expelled the Hebrew, and gradually became the predominant language of their country. In the volume before us Mr. Etheridge endeavours to call the attention of the biblical student to this language, that he may appreciate its importance, and estimate its beauties. The ancient Hebrew of the Mosaic and prophetic Scriptures, which had once been the living tongue of the twelve tribes, though it maintained its purity much longer, perhaps, than any other language, had become, our author asserts, even five hundred years before Christ, so extensively deteriorated as to retain upon the lips of the people but few vestiges of its earlier character. Numerous circumstances brought on this event : as, the immigration and settlement of Aramaic foreigners in the Israelitish territory (2 Kings xvii. 24) ; the subjugation of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in the reign of Jehoiakim (2 Kings xxiv. 1) ; this, in addition to the presence of large numbers of their military (2 Kings xxiv. 2), led to the appointment of Babylonians to many of the public offices ; and the use of their dialect in the translation of such public affairs as came within their province, led to the adoption and frequent use of their dialect by the leading men of that time (2 Kings xviii. 26) ; the transportation of the Jews into Babylon contributed most of all to silence the ancient vernacular, so that when the Jews returned to their fatherland they took with them the dialect of Babylon as their customary medium of speech. This language was in popular

use at the opening of the Christian dispensation. The Jews gave it the name of Hebrew; for, let it be remembered, the language of the Old Testament is never called by that name in the Jewish or Christian Scriptures; nor does it appear that it had any one specific designation. In 2 Kings xviii. 26, and 2 Chron. xxxii. 18, it is called YEHUDITH, *lingua Judaica*; and in Isa. xix. 18, Sepath-Kanaan, "the lip or speech of Canaan." But this was not the vernacular tongue which is called "Hebrew" in Josephus, Philo, or the New Testament, as in Acts xxi. 40. It was Aramean. The term "Syro-Chaldaic" has been often since the time of Jerome employed to describe it, but with manifest impropriety, inasmuch as the true Chaldaic has been lost. To denote the language of Babylon, we have in the Book of Ezra the term Aramith, or "Aramaic;" and from the establishment of it in the Holy Land, the proper designation, Mr. Etheridge suggests, would be that of "Palestinian-Aramaic," or Palestinian-Syriac. This language "was sanctified by the lips of the divine Redeemer. In these forms of speech He conversed with the virgin mother, instructed his disciples, and proclaimed to myriads the promises of eternal life." Our author then adverts to the dialects of the Aramaic, and afterwards to the importance of its study, which he conceives to be highly requisite to a right understanding of the inspired volume, and to a faithful declaration of "the whole counsel of God." To those who are acquainted with the Hebrew, and are desirous of going forward to the Aramaic, to whom the several voluminous Bibliographical Directories are not accessible, Mr. Etheridge presents us with the following memoranda: Among the Chaldee Grammars he mentions those of Harris, Nolan, Rigge, Altingius, Hirtius, and Michaëlis.

For a Chaldee Lexicon, he advises that of Buxtorf. Syriac Grammars, those of Yeates, Phillips, Nolan, Schaaf, Michaelis, Jahn, and Hoffman. Among the Syriac Lexicons he enumerates those of Trost, Gutbir, Schaaf, Castel, and Zanolini. The following are the Harmonies which are useful for the joint study of the Hebrew and Aramaic languages : those of Walton, De Dieu, the Heptaglott Lexicon of Castel, Bucher, Sennertus, Masclef, and Kals. We have been, on the whole, highly gratified with the observations of our author, not only on the Aramaic language itself, but also on the versions of holy writ which are extant in that tongue ; and ardently do we hope, that as he has succeeded in bringing a portion of the results of his extensive reading before the public, he will be no less successful in inducing the biblical students of this country to devote some part of their time to the investigation of this branch of sacred bibliography. That which adds materially to the value of the work of Mr. Etheridge, is a translation of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, and of the Epistle to the Hebrews, from the ancient Peschito-Syriac, which will not fail deeply to interest his readers. We have given this somewhat discursive notice of his valuable volume that we might, if possible, direct attention to the subject ; and hope to be able to resume its consideration in a still more comprehensive manner, when the second part of the "*Horæ*" comes before us : hoping that the encouragement which Mr. Etheridge will receive from the favourable reception of the first part will hasten the appearance of that which is to follow.

It is well known that at one time Syriac was very extensively the language of Christianity. There is a very ancient

inscription in China, executed by early missionaries, in the Syriac character. There is another in Madras. In the South of India there is a colony of Syrian Christians who have stood their ground in the midst of heathenism for considerably more than a thousand years. Syriac is still used in Persia and in other mountain regions of Asia, including the Lebanon, the banks of the Euphrates, and the shores of the Caspian Sea. We gather from the Gospels the strong probability that the language commonly used by our blessed Lord and His Apostles was the language to which Dr. Etheridge devoted so large a portion of his literary leisure, though it may be equally true that He frequently spoke in Greek.

"JERUSALEM AND TIBERIAS," ETC.

The respect of Eastern nations for learning and learned men, is shown in the records which have been kept of their names and works. The Biographical Dictionary of Ibn-khalikan, in the Arabic language, published in English by the Oriental Translation Fund Committee of the Royal Asiatic Society, occupies three imperial quarto volumes, and records the names and works of eminent Mohammedan writers. The Mohammedans followed the example of Jews, who present us with a history of uninspired literature

for more than two thousand years. With this literature Dr. Etheridge sought to make us acquainted by his volume entitled "Jerusalem and Tiberias; Sora and Cordova; a Survey of the Religious and Scholastic Learning of the Jews; designed as an Introduction to the Study of Hebrew Literature." This remarkable work he inscribed to the memory of his beloved and departed daughter, for whose instruction some portions of the work were written. "My Eliza," he says, "began to learn Hebrew when five years of age; and that more in the way of a little pleasant occasional pastime than as a task (a principle I observed in all that I taught her); and this practice, persevered in with the lapse of months and years, gave her, as she almost insensibly and yet rapidly acquired the language, the ability to read the Word of God in that form in which He first gave it to mankind: and much of the solidity and strength of her character, and her just conception of Divine truth, can be clearly traced to this circumstance of her life. I did not find it at all to interfere with the attainments by her of other accomplishments, but rather to favour it, and to sanctify the acquisition of them. It is neither a difficult study, nor an expensive one; and as a constituent in the education of young ladies it would be attended not only by the benefits I have named, but by the intellectual

advantage of enlarging their acquaintance with the laws of thought and language, and, if they follow it out, of opening to them an access to a rich and beautiful department of the *belles lettres* in the moral writings of the Jews, and especially in their poetical literature, which, for elegance of thought, refinement, loftiness, and purity of sentiment, transcends all other poetry; and lastly, and what is of unspeakable consequence, by contributing to give stamen and vigour to the character, and orthodox truthfulness to their religious principles, from the enlightened study of the Bible. In this latter respect, my daughter found it to be of priceless worth."

This unique volume, the first of the kind published in the English language, is a laborious compilation of biographical memoirs, and notices of literary composition by eminent Israelitish authors. We hope that one day it may come to be estimated at its proper value by Methodist students of the Word of God. It is little to our credit that the book and its subject are better known beyond the circle of Methodism than within it; and if the author had not been sustained by a consciousness of the value of the service his study and writings were rendering to the elucidation of the Word of God, he would have laid down his pen and ceased to expend his energies and his money on work in which he

found few of his brethren to sympathize with him. The volume closes with a beautiful Latin hymn, original we must suppose, on behalf of God's ancient people.

THE TARGUMS.

The first volume of the Targums, published in 1862, is dedicated, in a most touching inscription in the Latin language, to his beloved wife, whose death he had recently mourned, and the reunion with whom in a better world was the object of his longing desire. The preface to this volume exhibits his acquaintance with the voluminous publications recently issued on the continent of Europe and in this country, and his high estimation of the Jewish literati of that day, who, by their noble enterprises for the advancement of the study of their glorious language, and of the holy writings delivered in it to mankind, are doing a great work, and are worthy of the gratitude and honour of all who revere the Word of God. The introduction to the volume exhibits the large-hearted Christian and the learned theologian, full of tender love for the despised Jew, as well as for the Gentile world.

The Targum of Onkelos possesses an intrinsic philological and critical worth, from its close adherence to the Hebrew text, and as being a voucher for the condition of

that text as extant in the first century ; while the more diffuse paraphrase of the Jonathan or Palestinian Targum, variegated with the picturesque tradition of the Jews, will give it an attraction to the general reader. The mere English student may be grateful for the labours of Dr. Etheridge, affording to him, as they do, an advantage hitherto confined to a limited circle of learned men under exceptional circumstances.

The sixth and last volume of Dr. Etheridge's learned labours exhibited no falling off in vigour and acumen. On the contrary, it is a bulky book of six hundred and eighty-eight pages, completing the translation of the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel on the Pentateuch, with the Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum from the Chaldee. The volume is enriched with a Glossary of Hieratic and Legal terms in the Pentateuch, on the best authorities, Christian and Rabbinical, extending to seventy-six pages, and with three pages of Addenda. None but a man who had made sacred studies the work of his life could have produced these valuable pages. The pains bestowed on the explanation of the names of God indicate devout and diligent search. His elucidations of the dreadful name Jehovah cannot be read without awe, and the assertion that its proper pronounciation is lost will be new

to many. The true pronunciation of the awful name was last heard in the second temple at Jerusalem from the mouth of the High-priest Shemeon Hazaddik, and any attempt to recover it would be vain.

The proofs, which Dr. Etheridge adduces that the Targumists acknowledged a second person in the Godhead, in accordance with the first chapter of the Gospel of St. John, cannot be controverted, and go far to establish the theory that the Israelites acknowledged the Trinity in Unity until, in their mad opposition to Christianity, they denounced the sacred doctrine. The wealth of learning exhibited in this glossary, and in the entire volume, will not fail to excite the reader's admiration.

The last literary work of Dr. Etheridge it was my privilege to see, was a volume in manuscript filled with articles of the greatest value, chiefly on Hebrew antiquities and illustrations of Scripture, drawn from sources not generally accessible, but which had become familiar to him in the course of his many years' study and research in relation to all that was connected with the literature of the Old Testament. The volume was intended to supply articles supplementary to "Watson's Biblical Dictionary," to which it would have been an admirable sequel or appendage. It is much to be regretted that, from whatever cause, the

volume was never printed ; but it still exists, and there is some hope it may yet be published by the Book Room, to whose literature it would be a valuable addition.

A very learned Christian Jew, with whom Dr. Etheridge occasionally read Hebrew, assured me that Dr. Etheridge's Hebrew scholarship was extraordinary ; as was also that of his daughter, Miss Etheridge, who for many years was his beloved fellow-student.

Dr. Etheridge's love for all Jewish lore was evident from his careful study of the Apocrypha, from which he occasionally produced the most striking and beautiful passages.

The character of Dr. Etheridge's mind and heart may free him from the imputation of furnishing the "barren ground" in which it has been sarcastically said that Hebrew roots love to flourish. With a heart alive to all human affections, and a grasp of intellect hardly exceeded by the range of a most lively imagination, his Hebrew studies enabled him to furnish most valuable contributions to Hebrew literature. His "Jerusalem and Tiberias ; Sora and Cordova," is the work of a man who in sickness and in health was "never unemployed, never triflingly employed, and never whiled away time." It surprised and delighted the learned world. It was truly said there is nothing like it in our language. Rich in notices of all the most eminent men from the days

of Ezra until now, who have kept up an uninterrupted stream of Jewish literature, it opens out a vast field which could not otherwise be explored to its utmost extent in the longest life of leisure—a durable monument to his honoured name.

The student of Holy Scripture finds a rare fund of information and improvement in the fruits of Dr. Etheridge's diligent study of the languages cognate to the Hebrew, the ancient and more modern Syriac. His notes have enabled the mere English student to read "The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathān Ben Uzziel on the Pentateuch;" they have brought to his knowledge the several versions of Holy Scripture extant—the Aramean, Philoxenian, Jerusalem, Karkaphensian, the Peschito, or "Old Syriac"; the Apostolical Acts and Epistles from the Peschito or Ancient Syriac; while the "*Horæ Aramaicæ*," published so early as 1843, will not be overlooked by those whose duties and leisure will allow them to pursue this delightful line of study.

Dr. Etheridge's beautiful penmanship was well adapted to the writing of the Hebrew and Syriac characters.

Dr. Etheridge's successful study of languages and of the Holy Scriptures was a great happiness. The ease and gaiety of his conversation were indicative of a mind at

rest. He did not unseasonably obtrude his views and the result of his researches, but he was ready to respond to any inquiry. His prayers in public, and his sermons, were enriched and rendered doubly edifying by the treasures with which his memory was stored. And when he drew from his side pocket some ancient manuscript, or a book containing selections he had made, we knew that we might expect words of wisdom and consolation. What a pity such a man should die, and "all his thoughts perish!" Learning is an inheritance which does not pass to the next of kin, and cannot be claimed by the heir-at-law. His familiarity with the letter of Holy Scripture tended to give him views of the fulfilment of prophecy far in advance of those ordinarily entertained by his brethren of the Methodist Conference, but greatly in accordance with those of such names as Faber, Newton, etc. He anticipated the pouring out of the seventh vial, and the fulfilment of the "mystery and the word of God."

CHAPTER IX.

Closing Years.

ONE of the choicest spirits which ever adorned the Methodist ministry passed away to his reward during his Presidential year—1865. The Rev. W. L. Thornton was no ordinary man, and his election to the Chair of the Conference soon after his return from the United States, whither he had been sent as its representative to the American Conference, was in every respect a popular election. But, in the midst of his abundant labours, and apparently in the height of his usefulness, he was called to a far higher seat in the realms of everlasting light.

For several years the President of the Conference has preached a sermon for the Wesleyan Missionary Society, in the Centenary Hall, on the Thursday morning preceding the public meeting in Exeter Hall, and, had Mr. Thornton lived, this duty would have devolved on him in the year 1865. On his decease it fell to the lot of the ex-President,

the Rev. G. Osborn, D.D. ; but, I presume, at his request the Missionary Committee invited Dr. Etheridge to preach on the occasion, and a wiser choice they could not well have made. The Methodists of St. Austell deemed it a high honour that one of their ministers should be asked to visit the metropolis on such an errand, and it is said that they went in large numbers to the railway station to see him depart, and to wish him God-speed in his important work.

The discourse was founded on the sixteenth and seventeenth verses of the Ninetieth Psalm, "Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us ; and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us ; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it." In the course of his remarks, the preacher alluded to the death of the late Rev. W. L. Thornton, whom he had known for thirty-four years, and said that although they felt a pang of regret on account of their loss, yet the change was to him one of boundless gain.

He then dwelt on the manifestation of the work of God in creation, in redemption, in the giving of the Holy Spirit, in the early history of Christianity, in the Reformation, and in the great revival of the last century. In the last clause of the text there was, he said, a request, not only that the

work of God might appear *to* us, but *in* us, and *upon* us ; and we ought to pray that He would make us His workmanship, and would use us for the promotion of His glory. God looked upon the world He had made with pleasure, and so He did upon the soul that took hold of His salvation. If they wanted prosperity they must trust in the Lord, and He would give it. Had He not already given it ? What wonders the people of God were doing by various philanthropic agencies : the widow's heart was made to sing for joy, and the orphan to shed tears of gratitude. And they were exerting an influence in the cabinets and governments of the earth that would perhaps otherwise be engaged in all the wholesale murders of war. The Bible was translated into a hundred languages ; the missionary was landing upon every shore and proclaiming in every language the wonders of redeeming mercy ; and in all these great achievements it was the privilege and duty of each one to have some share, and not to live in vain.

These are but few of the thoughts to which the Doctor gave utterance on the occasion, but some who were present remember it as a season of delight, and were specially impressed with the earnestness and solemnity of the preacher's manner.

At the meeting in Exeter Hall on the following Monday,

Dr. Etheridge again occupied the post usually assigned to the President,—that of proposing the first resolution. “His speech,” says Dr. Hoole, “was a song of triumph throughout”; and he afterwards furnished a copy of it for the “Missionary Notices,” which renders it the more worthy of insertion here:—

We read of St. Benedict, that in a vision of the night he saw the whole darkened world illumined by a sunbeam. The good omen will be fulfilled, and what Benedict saw in a dream we shall behold in reality.

The beam that shines from Zion's Hill
Will lighten every land ;
The king who reigns on Zion's throne
Shall all the world command.

These outgoings of the Gospel are a preparation for, and a pledge of, such a consummation. The evangelists of Christ, the true successors of His apostles, go forth expecting it. Whatever sea they cross, whatever shore they land upon, they go as its heralds : whether their footsteps print the snows of the Arctic, or the burning sands of the tropical deserts, they bear its prophecy upon their lips, and tell all men of its coming in the distant isles of the sea, or in the stately cities of Europe and the East.

This last circumstance in the enterprises of the Society, and the only one I can touch upon among a multitude opened to our view in the far reaching panorama of the Report, is one which is giving a deep feeling of satisfaction to the most thoughtful and competent men among us, many of whom had

formerly a kind of misgiving, whether, in mainly restricting our endeavours to reclaim obscure and remote heathen populations, we were not neglecting a duty equally owing to the multitudinous heathenism of the civilized world. They hold that we should, indeed, do the one, but not leave the other undone. I believe we have followed the leadings of Providence, which took us first into the wilderness of savage life, and, training us to try our strength with heathenism in its most barbarous and revolting apparitions, have given us the experimental assurance that, by the might and mercy of the Divine Spirit, we are able to cope with and overcome it. But the same Providence bids us go up also into the high places of more refined but still unchristianized society, not in the far East only, but among the nations nearer home, in France, Spain, and Germany; yea, and as much as in us lies "to preach the Gospel to them who are at Rome also." And it now remains to be seen whether we can achieve the same victories on the shores of yonder continent which we have been able to win on those of Tongataboo or Fiji.

Your enterprises in Italy, for example, have created an ardent interest in the Christian mind, both in England and America. Italy has a charm for all of us, dressed as it is in those natural characteristics which render it one of the Edens of the earth, the land—if I may use the musical words of the German poet—

The land where the citron tree blows,
In dark green leaves the golden orange glows;
Soft breathe the zephyrs from the gentle skies,
'Mong myrtle bowers the fragrant cedars rise;
Know'st thou it well, that southern land so fair?
Oh, might we wander, my Beloved, there!

A country, too, so fraught with classic memories, where moss-clad arches, silent columns, and mouldering temples, linger as the shadows of the past ;

And ruined heaps,
That once were cities, strew the ground with history ;

and where, in the mediæval times, were given out, amid surrounding darkness, such flashes of genius in the songs of the poet, and the creations of the painter, the home places of Dante and Ariosto, Raffaele and Salvator Rosa, Gregory and Palestrina, but a country where all the while the one thing needful to the true well-being of any people has been wanting. Over the Italians there hung, till of late, an ignoble spell, which held them prostrate in political and religious degradation, all but hopeless ; a spell which now dissolves before the dawn of the glorious day. By a series of rapid developments, which will form one of the most cheering pages in the annals of the world, Italy, no longer a swarm of frivolous and priest-ridden republics, has become a united nation, and a constitutional kingdom, whose future has all the surer omens of prosperity and steadfastness in the people's willingness to listen to the truth which can make them really free. Now we know that even we can conduce to this object. We can give them that, the reception of which will be their true palladium,—the Gospel, pure and simple. And while their present mood of mind lasts, it is our duty to go in and do the work. Most opportune will be this aid, most sacred the obligations that this once unhopèd-for task of mercy, which our hands have found to do, we should do with our might.

English Christians love Germany, too, as the fatherland of the Reformation. The hero of that grand renaissance holds

a lofty place in the hierarchy of God's noblest servants among men ; but the more we admire the work he was enabled to accomplish, the more we lament the blight of that work, and the obscuration of its splendour, by the effect of what, to give an evil thing its proper name, we may too rightly call an apostasy from the Gospel, more dire and fatal than even that Romish apostasy from which Luther's thunder awoke the German peoples. More fatal—for Romanism never blasphemed the atonement, or denied the being of the living God ; while German infidelity, and Pantheistic superstition, under a Protestant name, has done, and is doing, both. Fearful have been the effects of these satanic delusions among a once God-fearing population, of whom, if we may judge by the sorrowful words of some of their own clergy, a vast proportion in the great towns and cities are mere atheists. But let us hope from the general reaction that has unfolded itself of late, that a change like that which passes over the disc of the sun, when the dark shadow of the eclipse wears away, is already in progress ; a new aurora shines, and "truth without veil again gives her face to the day." The learned theologues of Germany have caught a glimpse of the heavenly vision, and become re-enamoured of the truth, as it is in Jesus. They bear witness to it now from the chairs of the universities and many influential pulpits ; and by these means, as well as by the energetic operations of their domestic missions, it will pervade and renovate the popular mind. In this field also, simultaneously with our brethren of the American Methodist Episcopal Church, you have been willing to proffer a not ineffective aid.

The same experiment is being carried out on a yet larger scale in France, in an enterprise in which the simple Gospel,

preached with single mindedness, and in a loving spirit, yields powerful sustentation to the cause of the feeble, harassed evangelical churches of that country, and at the same time makes aggressive inroads on the errors of Romanism and the delusions of infidelity. For this good work the traditions of true Christianity in France inspire us with peculiar affection. We remember how, in the early time, bordering on the apostolic age, the first churches there soon passed from their baptism of water to that of blood ; and how, through following centuries, myriads after myriads fought the good fight, and swelled the numbers of the slain for Christ. There is hardly a neighbourhood in the land, of any old date, which is not haunted, or rather hallowed, by their memories. Along the heights of Dauphiny,

The bones

Lay scattered on the Alpine mountains cold,
Of them who kept the truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipp'd stocks and stones.

On the blood-stained plains of Provence, the deserts of the Cevennes, the streets of Paris, Orleans, Rouen, and Montpellier, bright with the flames of the ghastly pile, or running with the blood of wholesale massacres, a voice re-echoes the words of him who saw in the Apocalypse the long agony of the church : " Here is the patience of the saints ; here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."

Now, the cause for which these thousands of confessors died still lives, but with a feeble life. Well-nigh it had died out altogether at the dark days when the external manifestation of religion had vanished out of France ; but like the sudden life-germ of a tree, to outward appearance blasted to death, it shot

forth with a tender but genuine vitality, and will yet, if cherished, fill the land with fruit. And He who said to Peter, "Thou, when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren," has given us the power and will to help to develop the incipient vigour of the French Protestant congregations, which, if once well confirmed, will make them an unspeakable blessing to their country and to the world. What has been accomplished in this good work shows as clearly as any fact in ecclesiastical history, how strong to do good a solitary individual becomes when he gives himself faithfully to the service of God. Robert Haldane went to Geneva at a time when scepticism had overspread that once illustrious church with its deadly gloom. He gathered a company of young men who were making their study at the university, and explained to them, in reading the Epistles of St. Paul, the way of salvation by faith; and from these evening reunions there came forth such men as Cæsar Malan, Bost, Gaussen, and Merle d'Aubigné, who have been instrumental in resuscitating the cause of Gospel truth among their own countrymen, and in founding the Société Evangélique, which is now doing such good service both in Switzerland and France.

So, among ourselves, our own Charles Cook went to the south of France to consecrate his remaining years to the work of the Gospel there. Crowds attended the word in the open air and in the Protestant churches, among whom a new life unfolded itself. His labours were followed up by those of Hawtrey, Toase, De Jersey, Leale, Gallienne, Hocart, and others, whose names are right dear to me. The fruit of these labours already appears in the existence of more than a hundred Methodist congregations in various parts of the country, and is

reflected also in the vigour of a goodly band in the National Church, who are doing earnest battle for the faith against a hopeless unbelief, that but for such resistance would have already extinguished the last spark of vital Christianity, and have made French Protestantism but another name for blasphemy.

Could we turn our glances to the East, we should not fail to discover the presence of like hopeful agencies in the great resorts of Oriental civilization. In the strongholds of Brahminism in India the heathen priests and the Christian missionary are face to face ; and in China the breath of the Word is moving on the great deep of its multitudinous minds.

Methinks China should know more of Jesus Christ than she does as yet. Long ages ago she waited for Him. Her own sage Confucius, who, I imagine, in his wide travels for wisdom had drunk of the Hebrew fountains, expressly announced His coming. "A Holy One," wrote he, "will appear in the latter days, for whom nations look with desire as fading flowers thirst for rain. He will be born of a virgin, and His name will be the Prince of Peace. China shall behold His glory, whose rays will penetrate to savage lands which no ship can reach." So now may the missionary stand in the high places of Canton and Peking, and speak words like those which fell from the lips of the Apostle at Athens : "Him whom your own prophet foretold, Him in ignorance of whom your generations have lived in sin and died in sorrow,—Him declare I unto you." Nor doubt we that the Gospel will prove itself still the power of God unto salvation. The efficacious power attends the faithful employment of the means. God hath joined them together. Our duty and the Divine decree are pronounced alike. To obey is ours,

to crown the work with a saving effect belongs to Him who has promised and will do it. The strength lies not in the instrument but in the arm that wields it, and that arm is omnipotence. We must lean entirely upon it. What we call our own strength is vain as the broken bow, the withering grass, the fading bloom, the vanishing cloud, the wavering wind, the forgotten voice, the transient dream when one awaketh ; but He in whom we trust abides the same. His years have no end ; His truth endures ; His Spirit is good ; His counsel will stand, and His kingdom will appear. When they hear the voice of His commandment, and arise to traverse the wide earth with the revelation of His truth to a fallen world, the servants of the living God need yield to no dark misgivings as to what guide will lead them on their unseen way, or what power will make the weakest things invincible, while He goes before them who led forth His armies of old, and there shines upon their banner, in letters of celestial fire, His Name Divine.

This, I believe, was the last public service which Dr. Etheridge performed out of his own circuit. After the Conference of that year he left St. Austell and removed to Camborne ; and, as illustrative of his kind considerations for his successor's welfare, the Rev. R. Dillon, he wrote him a note respecting the circuit, the house, and the garden, in which he said, "On the east plot four of the apple trees have not yielded fruit this year ; but I have the larger tree, near the wicket, laden with apples. When I came here three years ago, some kind friend had gathered and taken them

away ; I hope yours will not share the same fate between my going out and your coming in. May the Lord preserve you in your journeys, endue you with good health, as the grace of His Holy Spirit, and crown your labours with great success."

In Camborne he was welcomed by many friends, and anticipated much pleasure in forming an acquaintance with, and enjoying the society of, the late Dr. G. Smith and others. "But," says Mr. M. G. Pearse, "he was then evidently in feeble health, and ought hardly to have taken a circuit ; yet so anxious was he while he lived to be working for God, and such delight did he take in proclaiming the Gospel of Christ, that he struggled against his weakness too long and too far." He entered on his work at Camborne with that fixedness of purpose not to spare himself which had long been characteristic of him, and there was a hallowed unction in his ministry, and an increased heavenly-mindedness in his life, which impressed his sister, Mrs. Hollis, and many others, with the conviction that his work was nearly done.

He had undertaken, some time before, another biography, the life of the sainted Fletcher, of Madeley, and in the prosecution of his task he frequently expressed himself as refreshed beyond measure. He left it unfinished ; but it is in the hands of one who is well able to supply what is

lacking, and I trust that ere long this work also will enrich the stores of our Christian Biography, and at the same time add another monument to the memory of its now sainted author.

When the autumn rains set in he took a severe cold, which baffled the skill of the physician, so that he was soon laid entirely aside. His deafness, too, had now become almost total, and the fatigue of listening to conversation was more than he could bear. Hence, for three months prior to his decease, every communication was made to him in writing; yet he spoke to his friends often, and dwelt with exulting hope on the short time which would elapse before they would meet again in their Father's house above. "I saw very much of him," says Mr. Pearse, "during the last few months of his life, and considered it a privilege indeed to listen to the rich and golden words which dropped from his lips. I shall never forget going into his parlour on the evening of the day on which the doctor had announced to him that he feared he could not live through another month. When I entered the room he rose, took my arm, and led me to a corner of the room, and looking up at a picture given him by the friends in the Penzance circuit, of the tomb of his loved and only daughter in Gulval churchyard, for some moments he never spoke (his deafness prevented ordinary

conversation), then turning to me said, 'The doctor, I suppose, has told you?' 'Yes,' I replied. 'It is my wish,' he said, 'when all is over, for you to order a coffin of plain oak, and that the funeral be conducted without any pomp or display; and,' pointing to the picture, 'that I be laid in the vault at Gulval.' I at once wrote on a scrap of paper, 'Every wish of yours shall be sacredly complied with.' I cannot convey an idea of the solemnity of his manner, and then how he suddenly relaxed and assumed his accustomed cheerful countenance and manner, saying, 'Now let us have done with this unpleasant subject,' and entered on other topics. I imagine the Doctor's wonderful attainments as a scholar were comparatively unappreciated by our Connexion. He was so retiring, and had such beautiful simplicity of character, that he shone more brightly in the circle in which he moved; and those valued him most who were brought into immediate contact with him. When I think of him I sometimes get beyond myself. Certainly, to say the least, I have always regarded him as a man of giant intellect, combined with such Christ-like humility as is to be rarely met with."

On the 4th of April he addressed to the members of the Quarterly Meeting, then sitting, the following beautiful and affectionate letter:—

MY DEAR BRETHREN,

Being prevented by confinement from meeting you to-day, and thinking that you would like to know how I am going on, I beg to say that generally through the blessing of God and Dr. Harris's care and skill, that the foundation cause of my dangerous malady in the chest has in a good degree been overcome, though it has left me in a very feeble and wasted condition, attended with a cough by day and night, that gives me to understand that the case is not yet decided, and that my fate still wavers in the balance.

In this state of uncertainty, my steadfast strength and refuge are in God as my God in Jesus Christ : He knows what is best ; and my supreme desire is that His will may be done.

I pray, indeed, that He would restore me that I may do some good service yet, and that He would be pleased soon to put His Word of Gospel truth and grace once more upon my lips ; but that if this be not His holy will, He would put upon these lips in life and death the words of submission, resignation, prayer, faith, love, and hope. Either way I shall do well, and shall find it a privilege to live, or a more blessed privilege to die.

May I be permitted to request your friendly intercessions that it may please the Lord to restore me to labour in the vineyard, or to fit me for the rest which remains for the people of God.

And I cannot but offer to my brethren of the pulpit, whether itinerant or local, my fervent acknowledgments and thanks for the generous and noble aid they have given me in my distress : never, never, will the memory of your kindness be effaced from my soul.

When we meet at last in the presence of our Divine Master

above, He will not be slow to remember this that you have done, for His Name's sake, to one of the least of His servants.

In hope of that day, I remain,

Dear Brethren, Yours affectionately,

J. W. ETHERIDGE.

To the Members of the

Quarterly Meeting at Camborne.

The effect produced on the meeting by the reception of this communication must have been very solemn and impressive. Like the great Apostle of the Gentiles, when a prisoner in Rome, this honoured servant of God was willing either to live or die; but when he penned this letter his desire to live and to do a little more work for God evidently predominated. This is by no means surprising, for many Christians, much older than he, cling to life, though they have no doubt whatever of their admission in a world where life will be a nobler and a happier thing. But when he became conscious of the fact that he must die he was perfectly resigned, and waited patiently till the summons came. Mr. Dillon, being on a visit to Camborne, called to see him one day, when he was rejoicing in the full assurance of hope, and expressed himself as having perfect peace, righteousness, and joy. There is little doubt that he had long enjoyed that perfect love which casteth out fear, though like Mr. Wesley himself, according to Mr. Tyerman's

statement, he does not appear to have made a public profession of the blessing. He had very elevated views of the nature of Christian perfection, and perhaps, though actually experiencing it, shrank from avowing it from a fear that anything he said or did should seem to be inconsistent with so high a state of grace. Is not this the case with many? Their lives testify to their holiness if their lips do not, and when at length they come to meet the last enemy they find, and their friends around them find, that their victory is complete, and that they are indeed clothed in the spotless robe of the righteousness of Christ.

This was the case with Dr. Etheridge. His last days were cloudless and serene, and his prospects of the future bright and glowing. He did not, like Goethe, when dying, ask for "more light, more light," for he had light from the cross, of which some time previously he thus wrote, and now found the hope of the last verse fully realised :—

Cross of my martyred Lord,
Now risen and adored,
On which was seal'd the grace to mortals sent ;
Angels and saints in Thee
Entranced in wonder see,
Of mercy to a world the God-rear'd monument.

Altar of Love Divine,
Round thee what splendours shine
In ever brightening light of holiness !

Which seraphim revere
Whilst sinners drawing near,
Are chang'd amidst its beams, and wake to bliss.

Sign of my soul's belief,
In days of gloomiest grief,
And in the hour when flesh and spirit sever,
Through thee my terrors cease,
Sooth'd to celestial peace,
The token of relief, the pledge of rest for ever.

A few days before his death he was visited by one of his colleagues, the Rev. T. Hughes, who, on entering his room, found he was asleep. Presently he awoke, and his eyes appeared as if he had been gazing on some blissful vision of saints and angels. His sister, Mrs. Hollis, asked Mr. Hughes to pray, and, though he could not hear them, yet he joined in the petitions offered, and then said, on parting with Mr. Hughes, with a strong emphatic voice, "The Lord bless you even with life for evermore." On the 24th of May, 1866, he calmly passed away from earth to enter into the presence of his Lord.

In the "Generalia" I met with an extract on dying from the Essays and Orations of Sir H. Halford, who, after forty years experience, says, "Of the great number to whom it has been my painful professional duty to have administered during the last hours of their lives, I have sometimes felt

surprised that so few have appeared reluctant to go to the undiscovered country from whose 'bourne no traveller returns.' Many have manifested this willingness to die from an impatience of suffering, or from that passive indifference which is sometimes the result of debility and extreme bodily exhaustion. But I have seen those who have arrived at a fearless contemplation of the future from faith in the doctrine which our religion teaches : such men were not only calm and supported, but even cheerful in the hour of death, and I never quitted such a sick-chamber without a wish that 'my last end might be like theirs.'" Such, doubtless, is the language of many a pious physician on leaving the death-chamber of the Christian believer, and such was the language of those who witnessed the departure of Dr. Etheridge. O glorious victory ! O blessed end ! "Soul, purified in the furnace of affliction, thou art now with God ! What is thy condition now that the veil is withdrawn from thine eyes ; now that faith is turned into sight ? What is thy condition, now that from the mouth of the Lord, with whom thou didst walk when thou couldst not see Him, thou hast heard, 'Faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord,' and the joy of thy Lord is enkindled in thine own bosom ? The fruit has fallen because it was ripe. Happy soul, it was appointed

thee to ripen on the earth ; not in vain hast thou experienced the pleasures of human life, its troubles, and its labours ; what thou hast accomplished outwardly has also been an inward work. All thy labours in the world were, at the same time, the building up of thy soul for a temple of God. When in the evening, after a hot day, one returns to his home laden with fruit, all the dwellers rejoice. Thus I see thee, thou blessed, enter into thy Father's house, and the dwellers in heaven rejoice. If there is so much joy in heaven, surely the lamentations on earth should cease. If thy voice could descend to us, surely it would say, 'Weep not.' Therefore must we dry our tears."*

"The fruit fell because it was ripe." It fell ; but it fell to be gathered by angel hands, and to be borne to that land where it will never wither, but bloom perpetually in the light of God's presence.

According to his wish, the remains of Dr. Etheridge were interred by the side of his beloved daughter in the churchyard at Gulval, near Penzance. I visited the grave in the spring of 1870, in company with W. D. Matthews, Esq., and as we stood by it, the Rev. W. W. Winfield, the vicar, drew near and spoke of the deceased in the very highest

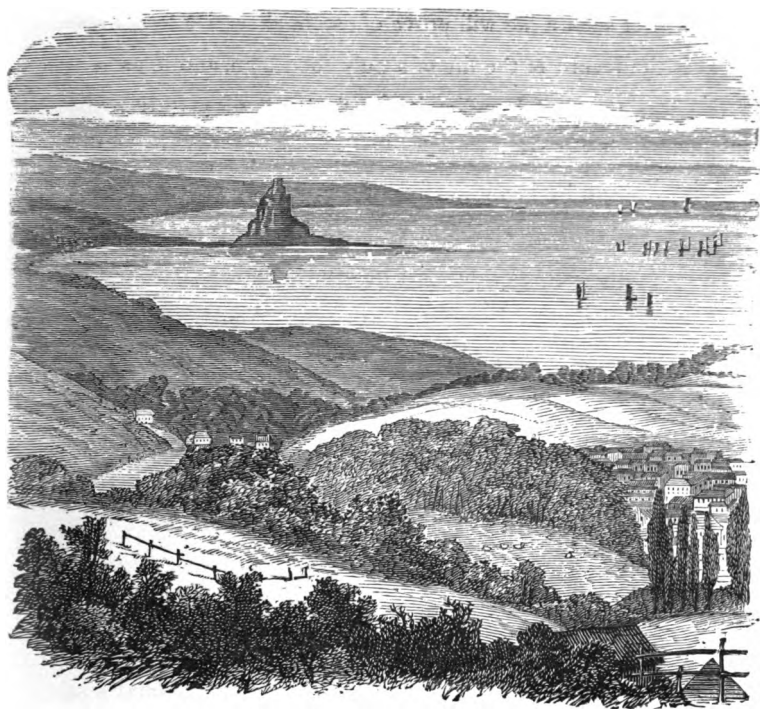
* Dr. Tholuck.

terms. I was informed that this excellent clergyman had offered to allow the Doctor's friends to put a memorial window into the church, and I regret that the offer was not accepted. He needs, however, neither window nor tablet, for his life and works are his best memorials ; and of him we may say, as Bishop Jeremy Taylor said of an eminent prelate, "He wrote many things fit to be read, and did many things worthy to be written, which, if we wisely imitate, we may hope to meet him in the resurrection of the just."

The grave is covered by a flat stone, surrounded by iron palisades, and on the stone are the following inscriptions :—

ELIZA MIDDLETON,
THE BELOVED AND ONLY DAUGHTER OF THE
REV. DR. J. W. ETHERIDGE,
AND OF ELIZA, HIS WIFE,
Died at Penzance, October 26, 1854, aged 20 years.

ALSO THE
REV. JOHN WESLEY ETHERIDGE, M.A., PH.D.,
FATHER OF THE ABOVE,
Who departed this life at Camborne, May 24, 1866,
aged 62 years.
"IN HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION."



VIEW OF PENZANCE BAY.

My task is nearly done. It has been a somewhat difficult and yet a pleasant one ; and I cannot but think that the record of such a life will prove of essential service to others. It is the record of the life of a truly good man, and if, as Mr. Ruskin affirms, "humility is the first test of a truly great man," it is the record of the life of a great man also. "I do not mean by humility," says that eminent writer, "doubt of his own power, or hesitation in speaking his opinion, but a right understanding of what he can do and say, and of the rest of the world's doings and sayings. All great men not only know their business, but usually know that they know it ; and are not only right in their main opinions, but they usually know that they are right in them ; only, *they do not think much of themselves on that account.*" The italics are mine ; for such I believe was the case with Dr. Etheridge ; he knew that he possessed gifts and superior learning, but *he did not think much of himself on that account*, but gave the glory to Him who made him what he was. And he being dead yet speaketh. He has left behind him some words and some works that, I believe, will never die : and perhaps others that may not live are as worthy of being remembered as those that will.

I have given, from the "Generalia," several of his hymns. I close this memoir with the following on the seven hours

of prayer, followed by a dissertation in which he wrests from Church of Rome the honour of having originated that devotional rule of life:—

THE SEVEN HOURS OF PRAYER.

I. MATINS. *Solemnitas Matutina.*

The gloom of night retires, and on the skies,
Brightening with holy light, morn plumes its wings,
Our willing spirits, therefore, would arise
To Thee, O Lord, the Eternal King of kings,
With votive songs, and prayerful sacrifice
To offer at Thy throne. Oh, on our inward sight
Shine, Sun of Righteousness, with beams more bright
Than those which now make glad this lower sphere,
And let Thy Holy One, with effluent grace,
Descend upon our souls, that we most near,
As Thy redeem'd, may come and take our place
In spirit with yon hosts, to whom 'tis given
In Thy most blessed presence to appear,
The Priesthood and the Royalty of Heaven!

II. TRINES. *Tertia Hora.*

But while sojourners in these climes below,
Ever around us be Thy mercy's arms,
To shield us 'mid ten thousand dread alarms,
And guide us through these labyrinths of woe ;
Lest, from the only path in which *they* go,
Who pass at length triumphant to their rest,
Our wayward feet should slide. Here, rears its crest
Wide-wasting sin, holding its reign unblest ;

The breath of life itself, empoison'd, wafts
Fell blasphemies, which scare us with dismay,
And round us hurtle the destroyer's shafts !
Keep, or we perish, Lord ! oh, keep to-day
This suppliant house, and on our works dispense
Thy Benediction's prospering influence.

III. SEXTS. *Ad horam sextam.*

Throned in the noontide heavens, the orb of day
Pours over realms and worlds his quickening ray ;
Resplendent emblem of Thy bounteous love,
Which bids His light arise on good and ill,
Warm with His genial brightness all that move,
And countless hosts with joyous vigour fill ;
Yet like Thee but in this—for doom'd decay
Must waste at length the fountains of his power,
And even now, whilst turns the mid-day hour,
He stoops upon the pathway of decline,—
But changeless glories evermore are Thine !
Let me Thy moral likeness, Lord, regain,
And in its sanctities immortal shine,
Through the high day, whose noon shall never wane.

IV. NONES. *Ad horam Nonam.*

In thy blest courts, Jerusalem, now rose
The flames of sacrifice, and incense sweet,
When to Thy glorious shrine, with willing feet,
They of that olden church, of heaven the spouse,
With vows and anthems, came to worship there,
At the ninth hour's solemnity of prayer.

Then came the day, at whose ninth hour, there went
Forth from the CROSS, the cry that ALL was o'er
When, midst unnatural night, and trembling earth,
And riven tombs, Thy vail asunder rent,
Thy pageant's passed away, and rose the birth
Of that blest covenant, in which 'tis mine
Even here, in truth and spirit to adore,
Cheer'd by His smile, the Majesty Divine.

V. VESPERS. *Ad Vesperum.*

The silent wings of twilight overspread
Ocean and earth, and sun-forsaken sky,
With shades, forewarning us of darkness nigh,
And that of Life another day is fled :
Memento solemn that amongst the dead
'Tis ours, how soon, fixed in our doom to lie !
Now at thy throne in tearful penitence,
O Lord we fall. Display toward each the grace
Which frees, through Christ, from guilt, and send us hence
The subjects of its power, that can efface
Sin's latest stains. So from our spirit's sight
The shadows of the death-condemn'd shall fly,
Whilst joy refulgent shines upon our head,
And at the evening time to us 'tis light.

VI. NOCTURNS. *Ad Noctu.*

Head of the Church, Thy hosts embattled crown
With victory o'er hell. Thy grace pour down
On throned kings, and all who under Thee
Just empire hold o'er men. Let them be free

Who groan in bondage. Light Thy star on high
 For mariners, their stormy way to explore ;
 Where rocks lie hidden, or where whirlpools roar.
 This night descend compassionately nigh
 To all who suffer, and to those who die.
 Hear, Friend of sinners, who at God's right hand,—
 Our Intercessor evermore dost stand.
 Angel of Peace, let our mean prayers ascend,
 And fragrant with the burning incense blend,
 Which rises from the censer in Thy hand. (Rev. viii. 3.)

VII. COMPLINES.

In the deep stillness of the brooding night,
 To Thee, All-present One, whose eyes ne'er sleep,
 Do I confide soul, flesh, and every power,
 Pavilion'd in thy Providence to rest,
 Seal'd with the signet of Thy gracious care,
 That shall this helpless frame in safety keep,
 And raise invigor'd with the orient light.
 Or if it be this night my end must come,—
 Eternal God ! May the tremendous hour
 Waft my wing'd soul to its celestial home ;
 And let this body sleep till Christ—all fair
 Bid it come forth, in fadeless glory drest.
 To Him with Thee, and with the Spirit blest,
 Be adoration endlessly expressed. Amen.

J. W. E.

NOTE. *Ancient Canonical Hours.* "The universal church," says Bishop Patrick, in his Treatise on Prayer, "observed anciently certain set hours for prayer, that all Christians throughout the world might at the same time join together to

glorify God, and some of them were of opinion that the angelical host, being acquainted with those hours, took that time to join their prayers and praises with those of the Church." It is undeniable that the Old Testament Church had her divinely prescribed times of public worship. Not only her jubilees and passovers, her new moons and her Sabbaths, but her morning and evening sacrifice throughout the year. In addition to these hours, the faithful of that communion seem to have had an understanding among themselves that certain other seasons in the day should be sacred to private devotion. Evening and morning, and at noon, says the Psalmist, will I cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice (Psalm lv. 17). And such was the practice of Daniel, as we learn in chap. iv. 10: "His windows being open towards Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." The author of the CXIX. Psalm records his determination "at midnight" to "rise and to give thanks" (ver. 62), and in the same composition he gives, perhaps, a summary of the daily devotions of the pious, when he declares it to be his practice seven times in the day to offer thanksgiving unto God (ver. 164).

It appears that the first Christians continued for sometime to adhere to the Jewish canonical hours (compare Acts xiii. 1 and 9). And in connection with these hours they had their own peculiar seasons for social worship, which during the greater portion of the first two centuries were held between midnight and daybreak, at first in private houses and in separate companies, and hence called the anteluean service, or that performed before daylight. Thus, Pliny the younger, in his letter to the Emperor Trajan, describing the customs of the Christians of the

Bythinian province, says, "*essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire*," they were used to meet on a certain stated day before it was light.

As the fury of persecution abated, and Christians acquired an increasingly powerful hold on the public mind, these private solemnities were laid aside, the anteluean worship was succeeded by what was called *Novella Solemnitas*, the new solemnity, also the *Matutina* and *Prima*, the morning or primary service ; and in connection with this a stated evening service appears to have been ordained at the same time. This was called by the Greeks *λυχναψία*, and by the Westerns *Lucernarium*, because begun at candle light, and also *Sacrificium Vespertinum*, the evening sacrifice, using the last term in the general sense of public worship.

Though the members of the Christian Church had doubtless, from its very foundation by the apostles, been habituated to the duty of personal devotion, this being a uniform development of the regenerate life, and in the case of parents, or heads of believing families, of domestic worship as well, yet the appointment of certain other times of the day for consentaneous supplication and praise, which took place shortly after the regular establishment of morning and evening prayer, could not but have an advantageous influence in advancing the common edification.

Thus the third, sixth, and ninth hours of prayer are mentioned by Tertullian, in a work on fasting, written about A.D. 212, and recommended (not, indeed, as seasons of public worship, but for the encouragement of private devotion) by Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, in his treatise on the Lord's Prayer, A.D. 252. As hours for social worship also, it may be remarked that their

observance did not originate in the western church, but in that of the east ; the first example of their forming a part of ecclesiastical discipline being (according to Cassian Institutes, lib. iii. 2) that of the Christians of Mesopotamia and Palestine. Basil, who was Bishop of Caesarea, A.D. 369, whilst he admitted that the whole of our life should be regarded as a season of prayer, prescribed certain stated intervals for the specific purposes of worship, in imitation of the example set before us in the Holy Scriptures. David, Paul, and Silas, he remarked, are mentioned as praying at *midnight*, and David again speaks of *morning, evening, and noonday*, as sanctified by prayer. In another part of his works he particularizes the seven periods in the day which he would have devoted to this purpose, viz., (1) *The morning*, so that the first movements of our souls may be consecrated to God, and that we may not undertake the case of any engagement till our minds have been cheered and strengthened in Him. (2) *The third hour*, in devout remembrance of the mission of the Holy Spirit. (3) *The sixth hour*, that we may be delivered from the incursion of the mid-day demon. (4) *At the ninth hour*, as Peter and John, who then went up to the temple to pray (Acts ii. 1). (5) *Toward the end of the day*, when it is fit to return thanks for its mercies, and to implore pardon for its sins. (6) *At nightfall*, supplicating repose, innocence, and safety through its hours. (7) *At midnight*, like Paul and Silas, who then sang praises to God (Acts xvi. 25).

St. Chrysostom, who was ordained a deacon at Antioch, A.D. 380, and became Bishop of Constantinople in 398, in his comment on the CXIX. Psalm, specifies *six* periods for devotion in the day. (1) At the end of the night, or morning dawn, when

thanks should be given for the return of another day. (2) At the third hour, because at that time the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles. (3) At the sixth hour, because Christ our God in flesh was then nailed to the cross, and blotted out the handwriting that was against us. (4) At the ninth hour, because He then having shed His blood, dismissed the spirit, and thus redeemed us from the power of the devil. (5) At sunset, when thanks are offered for the past day's mercies. (6) At down lying.

From these authorities I think it will be clearly evident that this devotional rule of the Christian life is not of "*Roman Catholic*" origin, but was first observed as a Christian institute, at a very early period, by the Churches of the *East*, who derived it from the practices of ancient Hebrew piety. Although, therefore, the habit of prayer at those hours was subsequently adopted by the Western apostate Church in her monastic institutions, it must not be condemned by Protestants on that account, as it is demonstrably independent of those perilous errors of doctrine, and idolatrous superstitions, which are the essentials of Popery, and which have justly rendered its very name accursed.

OUTLINE LECTURES
ON THE
HISTORY OF THE PATRIARCHS.

BY THE REV. J. W. ETHERIDGE, M.A., PH.D.

THESE outlines were first prepared at Leeds, in the year 1852, and appear to have been used in the Bible-class of the author. Some of them are much fuller than others ; and they form part of a series on the whole Book of Genesis. They illustrate the careful method which Dr. Etheridge pursued in giving instruction to young people ; and will furnish useful hints to others who are similarly employed. They are like the rough sketches of an artist, from which a skilful hand may derive considerable instruction.

T. S.

LECTURE I.

THE CALL OF ABRAHAM.

THE call of Abram was the first divine act towards the formation of the visible Church. Up to this time the worshippers of the true God were mixed with the idolatrous world, the consequence of which was their frequent apostacy, so that true religion had now almost vanished from the earth. Even among the descendants of Shem there were few who remained faithful to the God of their fathers. God, however, did not destroy the world again, but separated to Himself a Church in the world. This was done about the year 2070, or midway between the fall of the first Adam and the coming of the second Adam to redeem and save us.

Along with this call there was given a more full and particular revelation and confirmation of the covenant of grace. This had been twice made known already, but only in part, —first in Paradise (Gen. iii. 14, 15); secondly, to Noah after

the flood (Gen. viii. 20, 21). But now it was shown more particularly, (1) that the Messiah should be of the family of Abram (Gen. xii. 3); (2) that the whole human race should have an interest in His work (Gen. xii. 3); (3) that the great condition of salvation should be faith in Him.

These truths were made known to Abram by successive revelations from God. Let us mark the principle of them.

I. The first instance of God's appearance to Abram is not described in the Old Testament; but it is referred to in particular terms in Acts vii. 2—4; when Stephen says, "The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham," etc. (Comp. Gen. xii. 1, Neh. ix. 7.) He was now required to leave his native land; but whither he was to go was not yet told him.

II. The second call is related in Gen. xii. 1. Abram was now in Charran, having left Ur, of the Chaldees, his native home. This call was accompanied with a more particular promise. The land was now pointed out; a new requirement was made that he should separate himself from his worldly kindred; and thus there was another trial of his faith. *Reflections.*—(1) The Church of God consists of those who are called out of the world, and who obey the call (2 Cor. vi. 17, 18). (2) The land of Canaan to which Abram now went by divine direction, was a type of the

eternal inheritance in reserve for the saved (Heb. xi. 8—10).

III. The third call was given in Canaan, at the oak of Moreh (*Instruction*), for there God appeared to Abram again (Gen. xii. 7, 8). Observe Abram's habitual devotion. In his wandering life the altar rose by his tent.

IV. On his return from Egypt, whither he had gone unadvisedly on account of famine. After his separation from Lot he had a fourth manifestation of the Deity, in which the promise of Canaan is again repeated (Gen. xiii. 14—17).

V. In Gen. xv. 1, etc., we have an account of a fifth revelation. And this is the first place where the personal Word of God is named. There were various methods employed by the Almighty in revealing His will to men. (1) By audible voices; (2) by visions either in sleep or trance; (3) by the ministry of angels appearing in human form; (4) by the agency of the Holy Spirit on the mind; (5) by the apparition of the Second Person of the Trinity arrayed in the likeness of men. To this Being is given the title of the Word of Jehovah, and He it is who speaks to Abram on this fifth occasion.

VI. When Abram was far advanced in life, and God said to Him—"I am God Almighty,—or God all-sufficient,—walk before Me and be thou perfect" (Gen. xvii. 1—10). On

this occasion the covenant was renewed, the name of Abram changed to that of Abraham, *i.e.*, father of a great multitude, the rite of circumcision enjoined ; and the name of Sarai exchanged for that of Sarah, signifying princess.

VII. On Mount Moriah (Gen. xxii. 15—18), when after the grand test of Abraham's faith the covenant was renewed, and the promises were confirmed by the oath (comp. Psalm cv. 9, Heb. vi. 13, 14).

Thus gradually, and step by step, did God unfold His purposes to His servant ; and thus does He often deal with His people now,—making known to them His will at different times and with different degrees of light, as they are able to receive it and are prepared to act thereon.

LECTURE II.

THE PROMISES MADE TO ABRAHAM.

THE Scriptures recount, as we have seen, a series of Divine revelations made to Abraham. In these were given the following promises :—

I. The promise of elevation to greatness and blessedness (Gen. xii. 2, xxii. 18).

II. That he should be the medium of blessedness to

many others (Gen. xii. 3). *Obs.*—The Hebrew people have been a blessing to the nations of earth in becoming the depositories of revealed truth to the world. The writers of the Old Testament were Hebrews; the writers of the New Testament Hebrews; the apostles and evangelists of the Gospel Hebrews; and the Redeemer Himself in human nature was of the race of Abraham. It is to this last truth that this promise more particularly refers.

III. That God would make him the father of a great multitude of nations (Gen. xvii. 5). The alteration of his name to Abraham was the token of this: ABRab. HANon, goi M. Ab. rab. hamon. goim—the father of a great multitude of nations. The saved of all nations are called the children of Abraham; and if it be true that the Saxon people are, as some argue, the descendants of the ten tribes, we see in the fact of the multiplication of this race over so many parts of the world another illustration of this promise.*

IV. That he himself as well as his seed should possess the land of Canaan for an everlasting inheritance (Gen. xiii. 14—17). (1) The other matters of these promises have a literal meaning,—a personal, not a figurative Messiah is spoken of; a literal posterity is promised; and therefore

* This, however, is more than doubtful.—T. S.

not a figurative Canaan, but that very land. (2) But the promise as explicitly affirms that Abraham *himself* shall possess the land as well as his seed (Gen. xiii. 17, Heb. xi. 8)—“which *he* should hereafter *receive*.” (3) The possession of the land was to be one of the benefits resulting from his relation to and his interest in the Redeemer. The seed spoken of was Christ (Gen. xii. 17, Gal. iii. 16). Hence Canaan is called Immanuel's land (Isaiah viii. 8). (4) The land is promised as an everlasting inheritance (Gen. xiii. 15, xvii. 8). (5) These promises are unconditional, and therefore absolute and unalterable. (6) The promises were confirmed by the Divine oath (Gen. xxii. 16, Heb. vi. 16—18). (7) Notwithstanding all this, Abraham has never yet possessed the land. He lived and died without possessing it; but he lived and died in the full expectation of possessing it, though not in his then present life (Heb. xi. 8—16).

It will plainly enough follow from the tenor of these promises that the descendants of Abraham have yet an interest in the promised land (Ezek. xi. 16, 17); but, waiving their case, we have now to do with Abraham's personal interest in the promise, and we remark—

1. That Abraham's expectations extended to the scenes and realities of the *resurrection life*. Thus when Isaac lay bound upon the altar, Abraham believed the promise re-

specting him would be literally fulfilled though he should plunge the sacrificial knife into his heart. He believed that God would raise him from the dead (Heb. xi. 17—19). But if he could thus believe for his child he could also believe for himself; hence St. Paul says, that the promises made to the fathers included the hope of the resurrection (Acts xxvi. 6—8, comp. Luke xx. 37, 38).

2. Those who take the statement of Rev. xx. 4, to mean a literal resurrection, believe that at an approaching day Abraham and all the distinguished saints of God will reappear upon the earth (comp. Rev. xx. 4, Dan. xii. 13, Job xix. 25). And in the service for the Hosanna Rabba are these words, "The voice maketh glad the rose of Sharon, for the sleeper in Hebron shall arise."

3. The endless duration assigned to the inheritance of the land leads us forward to the contemplation of that new earth wherein will dwell righteousness (Isaiah lxxv. 17, lxxvi. 27; 2 Peter iii. 13; Rev. xxi. 1—3). Earth will then be one of the heavenly places here called a heavenly country, and God will dwell with men, and be their God.

LECTURE III.

THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM.

It is said in Gen. xv. 6, that Abraham believed in the Lord.

I. What he believed we have seen in the revelations and promises which God made to him ; but

II. How did he believe ?

1. He believed with a faith which fully *assented* to the truth revealed to him. He entertained no doubt either of the reality of the revelation or of the truth of the promises it conveyed to him.

2. He believed with a faith that fully *consented* to the divine purpose thus made known concerning him. He embraced the will of God, and was ready to obey the divine commands.

3. He believed with a faith which heartily *confided* in the unchangeable faithfulness of God. He trusted in Him.

These are the three essential qualities of faith : unhesitating assent of the mind ; full consent of the will ; and steadfast trust of the heart : and all this is implied in the term here employed. The Hebrew word for "I believe" is *heemin*, a word derived from Amen ; and it is here said

of Abraham, "Heemin ba Jehovah," he believed in Jehovah : he confided in him ; he gave Him the Amen o his whole mind and heart. Thus it is that we must believe.

III. The trial of Abraham's faith. It was strongly tried, but proved to be genuine.

1. He was called to go forth from his native land, trusting only in the goodness of God, and he went forth.

2. He was promised a numerous posterity when as yet he had no child, and when himself and his wife were already in the old age of life. He nevertheless believed (Heb. xi. 11, 12).

2. His son Isaac, through whom God had declared his future posterity should be called, he was commanded to sacrifice in death (Gen. xxii). Read then arrative, and observe whom God required him to sacrifice—(1) Not a faithful servant ; (2) not a friend merely ; (3) nor an adopted child ; (4) nor one son among many who would be left ; (5) nor was it at a time of life when he could expect other sons ; (6) nor was it a son who, from some circumstances, was comparatively indifferent to him, as Ishmael ; (7) nor a son in whom he took no delight : but Isaac whom he had loved. Observe, too, (1) That it was not another person who was to do the dreadful task ; but he himself ; (2) nor was he to do it at once, on the first

impulse ; but after three days of agonizing reflection. Yet Abraham's faith, working by obedience, was not found wanting.

IV. The faith of Abraham was crowned with God's justifying grace. He believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness. The word for *righteousness* is Tside-kêl, justification ; and the word counted means accounted or imputed. On account of his faith, God treated him as a righteous man.

V. The manner in which Abraham was justified is the same as that in which we may be forgiven and made righteous. Faith in a redeeming God,—faith in a promise—keeping and covenant God, has been, is now, and always will be reckoned to believing man for righteousness (Rom. iv. 2—25, v. 1). Nor is there any other way by which sinners can find pardon and justification to eternal life (John iii. 16, 18, 36).

LECTURE IV.

ABRAHAM A WARRIOR.

THE history of the patriarch Abraham exhibits him to our consideration, (1) as a sinner saved by faith in a redeeming and covenant God (Gen. xv. 6); (2) as the

head of a great household fulfilling the relations of life approvingly in the sight of heaven (Gen. xviii. 17—19); (3) as a priest, offering sacrifice and worship at the family altar (Gen. xiii. 4); (4) as a prophet to and through whom God made revelations of His will (Gen. xx. 7, xv. 1); (5) in chapter xiv. we see him in a new and extraordinary character,—that of a victorious warrior. He proves himself a patriot and hero in vindicating the right of himself and of his country, avenging the wrongs of the oppressed, and delivering the captives from the destroyer. Mark,—

I. The occasion: The land of Canaan had become a scene of violence and desolation through the invasion of a powerful enemy.

1. That part of Canaan was then divided into several territories, ruled by petty chieftains or kings (ver. 2).

2. These kings had, fourteen years before, been brought into subjection to the dominion of Chedorlaomer, the then reigning head of the great Assyrian empire founded by Nimrod (ver. 4).

3. After twelve years' subjection they had revolted, a step which had brought down upon them a second invasion. Chedorlaomer with an immense army, composed of his own forces and those of three tributary kings (ver. 1), sets out towards Canaan, and, on their way thither, they wage a

slaughtering war among several other tribes which had probably rebelled also against the Assyrian emperor (vers. 5—7).

4. The kings of Canaan united their forces to resist this invasion. A battle took place in the vale of Siddim, which at that time was an extensive valley, which, in the great convulsion of nature that destroyed the guilty cities of the plain, became shortly after whelmed in the waters of what is now the Dead Sea (ver. 3).

5. The Canaanites were completely defeated by the superior number and power of their enemies. Their cities were rifled of their treasures, and themselves and the principal inhabitants were carried away prisoners (ver. 10, 11).

6. Among these last were Lot, the kinsman of Abraham. And here we are reminded, (1) Of the former residence of Lot with Abraham (ch. xiii. 4, 5); (2) of the cause of their separation and of Abraham's generous and liberal conduct towards his kinsman (vers. 8, 9); (3) of Lot's worldly-mindedness, in the gratification of which, while he gained much of this world's substance, he became mixed up with the people of the world and exposed himself to much anxiety (2 Peter iii. 8). And now it involved him in the judgment which divine providence permitted to befall them (ch. xiii. 10—13, xiv. 12).

7. Abraham on hearing of these disasters is stirred up to the heroic design of redressing this public injury. Observe, (1) Though war in most cases is a crime which leads to many other crimes, yet in some cases, in the present state of the world, even war is justifiable,—an unprovoked invasion, for instance, ought to be repelled. (2) Abraham, a man of peace, now becomes a man of war, on two grounds—as the deliverer of his kinsman and neighbour from tyrannical oppression and ill-usage ; and as the proprietor by divine right of the land thus invaded ; for although he was not in possession of the land, yet he believed God, and felt himself the rightful owner of the territory which God had given him.

II. The battle.

1. With the scanty forces he could raise, amounting to a few hundred men, he pursued the enemy to Dan, the northern extremity of the country, passed on to Hobah, which was near Damascus ; and coming suddenly upon the invading host by night, and aided by the providence and power of God, he put them to an entire rout, and rescued the captives and the spoil. Compare with this the case of Gideon and the Midianite army in the Book of Judges. In each case the victory was miraculous, *i.e.*, the Almighty struck these multitudes of soldiers with a panic, which made it easy work for their few assailants to overcome them.

2. Abraham displayed the most noble disinterestedness. He did the good work for its own sake, and not with a view to any share in the spoil (ver. 21—24).

3. On his return he met Melchizedec ; but this interview must be the subject of a separate lesson.

LECTURE V.

MELCHIZEDEC AND ABRAHAM.

ABRAHAM on returning from victorious war was met by Melchizedec, king of Salem, and priest of the Most High God, who, it is said, brought forth bread and wine for his refreshment, and gave him the blessing of the Lord (Gen. xiv. 18—20). The incident is here given in the bare historical form ; we must advert to Psalm cx. and Heb. vii. for additional particulars.

I. The person of Melchisedec. Of this mysterious priest-king there have been various conjectures. Some consider him to have been an angel ; some, both Jews and Christians, that he was the patriarch Shem ; and others, that he was the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, manifested in a visionary form. All these opinions are contradicted by the accounts of him in Scripture.

1. He is mentioned as *one of the persons in the narrative*, equally real and human like the others. His *local residence* is specified—Salem ; the old name for Jerusalem (Psalm lxxvi. 1, 2). And his *appearance* on this occasion is described like the other occurrences. It excites no surprise in Abraham or the other parties present. Melchizedec, in the exercise of princely hospitality, offers refreshment to the weary host, and gives their leader the token of the Divine approval and blessing. We may take Melchizedec therefore as a real though extraordinary person.

2. He was a *royal person*—a king who reigned in righteousness,—hence his name, Melek-zedek,—a righteous king,—Meleki-zedek, *my* righteous king. Again, he is called Melek-Shalem, king of peace.

3. He was a *sacerdotal person*,—"priest of the Most High God."

4. He was a *typical person*—a type of the Son of God, our divine prophet, priest, and king. (1) His priesthood was a type of Christ's priesthood (Psalm cx. 4), and the import of those words as laid open by St. Paul (Heb. vii. 1—10). The unbelieving Jews objected to the priesthood of Jesus that He was not of the family of Aaron ; but the Apostle, from Psalm cx., shows that He was to be a priest of another order—not that of Aaron, but that of Melchizedec.

and it is to the priesthood of the latter that we are to apply what is said in Heb. vii. 3. (a) The priesthood of the Jewish Church had father, mother, and descent; *i.e.*, they belonged to a given family, out of which no man could sustain the office; but Melchizedec's priesthood had no such office. (b) Their priesthood had beginning of days and end of life. They commenced their duties at thirty or thirty-one, and ended them at fifty years of age (Num. iv. 2—35). But Melchizedec's priesthood was without any such limit of time. It had no pedigree. None came before him and none after him. In this respect his priesthood was a type of Christ's. (c) Their priesthood was chiefly limited to their own nation and people. Melchizedec's had no such limitation, and in this respect again he was a type of Christ, who is the High-Priest both of Gentiles and of Jews. (2) The person of Melchizedec was in some respects a type of the person of Christ. (a) In his having no recorded genealogy, like the Aaronic priests, he set forth Him who in His human nature had no father, and in His divine nature no mother; Him who is the eternal Son of God (Heb. vii. 3). (b) He was a king as well as a priest, and thus the representative of Him who is a priest upon His throne (Zech. vi. 13)—the true Melchizedec, King of Righteousness and King of Peace.

II. The interview with Abraham.

1. In the history in Gen. xiv. we see Melchizedec in the discharge of one great branch of the priestly office, viz., blessing on God's behalf (ver. 19), and offering thanksgiving to God on man's behalf (ver. 30). The bread and the wine were not required merely for food,—they had plenty of their own; and the Jewish rabbis failed not to see in these elements the foreshadows of the miracles; and Christian divines have discerned in them the foreshadows of the eucharist.

2. We find Abraham recognizing the priestly character of Melchizedec in offering him tithes of all (ver. 20). It is very probable that Abraham had a prophetic insight into the typical character of Melchizedec, beholding in him the emblem and representative of his Saviour (John viii. 56). In this transaction St. Paul points out the superiority of Melchizedec's priesthood to that of Aaron (Heb. vii. 4—10), and, by consequence, the far more exceeding superiority of His priesthood, also, who is Melchizedec's Priest and Saviour and King. The priesthood of Aaron's house was only transient; that of Jesus, constituted by the sworn decree of God, endures for ever.

3. Let us come to this great High-Priest, that in and through Him we may be heirs of the blessing of Abraham's

God. We too have enemies to be overcome, and friends to be rescued. Our enemies and theirs are many and strong ; but our strength is given us from on high ; and if, wherever we contend with sin, we look for help, it will come, and returning from each victory we shall be met by the Divine Melchizedec with such blessings as only He can give. He reveals Himself to the faithful as He does not unto the world.

LECTURE VI.

ISAAC.

THE history of Isaac presents a beautiful spectacle of tranquillity and piety, and offers to our consideration an expressive pattern of a holy life. He was the peculiar gift of God to Abraham and Sarah—a child of promise, born in their old age, and given as a pledge of the fulfilment of all divine promises to his father. Let us consider him,—

I. In his youth. It was distinguished by the memorable event of his being fully surrendered by his father to the will of God. Abraham obeyed the call which summoned him not to withhold his beloved son, but to surrender his very life to the Creator. Isaac was then twenty-five, or, according to some, thirty-six years old. He must therefore have fully

concurred with his father's obedience to this awful decree. He made no resistance, but was willing to be offered. In the prompt obedience of the father, and the entire submission of the son, we have a pattern for our own imitation in every instance on which our faith is put to a painful trial. In this transaction Isaac appears to have been designed as a type of Christ (Rom. viii. 32; Phil. ii. 8; Heb x. 6—7; John x. ii).

But he was given back to his parents, and he continued to be a comfort to them all their remaining days. He partook with his father the cares and labours of the pastoral employment followed by the patriarchs; and appears to have been a young man of quiet contemplation and devout habits of life (Heb. xi. 9; Gen. xxiv. 43).

II. His marriage. Here several circumstances are highly instructive. In Gen. xxiv. we have,—

1. The example of a good father seeking to preserve his son from the calamity of an improper marriage with any one of the heathen Canaanites (ver. 2, 3).

2. The example of a good and faithful servant in the conduct of Eliezer, who readily undertook the task imposed on him by his master (ver. 9—10).

3. In Rebecca and her family we have a picture of the simple and affectionate domestic life which distinguished the primitive people of the east.

4. In the conduct of Isaac we have again an instance of his obedient concurrence with the wise counsel of his father ; —unlike Esau in after days, and unlike many young people in our days.

III. His later life ; during which several important events occurred, and by which several important lessons are taught.

1. Abraham followed Sarah to the tomb, and subsequently Isaac and Ishmael performed the last solemnities over their father at the cave of Machpelah. Ishmael then became the head of a tribe which, in after days, grew into the Arabian nation, and Isaac continued the pilgrim life of his father, greatly prospered of God (Gen. xxvi. 2—5, xxv. 8—11).

2. In the training up of their sons, Isaac and Rebecca were ensnared into the fault of partiality. Parents, in doing this, sin against the true interests of their children. No child should desire to be an object of unjust favouritism.

3. In the present life man's most tranquil lot is often disturbed by anxieties and cares. The old age of even the peaceful and pious Isaac was not without its shadows. Some years before his death he appears to have lost his eyesight (Gen. xxvii. 1) ; and his mind was greatly troubled by the disobedient and reckless conduct of his eldest son (Gen. xxvi. 34, 35).

4. Isaac had inherited the blessing which God gave to

his father Abraham, and upon him devolved the patriarchal and prophetic duty of conferring that blessing on his son. In the fulfilment of the divine purpose of choosing the younger rather than the elder son as the progenitor of the Messiah, the blessing passed away from Esau, and was conferred upon Jacob. Who shall say how much Esau's bad conduct had caused this decision?

5. The age of Isaac exceeded that of his father. Abraham died in his hundred and seventy-fifth year, but the days of Isaac, we are told, were a hundred and four-score years. But he went down to the sleep of the cave of Machpelah with the expectation of another life which will never end (Heb. xi. 13, 14).

4. As Isaac and Ishmael buried Abraham, so we see Isaac and Jacob meeting in peace at the grave of their father (Gen. xxv. 29).

All these facts are admonitory and instructive, and may be pondered, by young men especially, with great advantage. The lessons of the Bible are for all time.

LECTURE VII.

JACOB.—THE YEARS OF HIS YOUTH.

THE Bible is the history of redemption. Its details turn therefore upon this main object. Its earliest pages record not the secular story of empire, so much as the personal biography of men who held a divinely appointed relationship to this great purpose of mercy. This explains how it is that so much of the Book of Genesis is occupied with the lives of the three great patriarchs, the memoirs of the last of whom we proceed to consider.

Jacob, though in his day only, in the common view, an obscure and wandering shepherd, was destined nevertheless to occupy in all subsequent ages an illustrious elevation in the history of the world. He was, in an eminent sense, *the* patriarch of the Jewish nation, inasmuch as from the several branches of his family sprung the twelve tribes. Above all, he was the progenitor of the Messiah, who is sometimes, in the prophets, spoken of under his name; from him, too, the children of God in every age are the seed of Jacob—the Israel of God.

In reading the life of the patriarch, we should remember three principles. (1) He must be regarded as the ancestor

of the Messiah. (2) Some of his actions should be viewed as typical. (3) The historian is not attempting an exhibition of a perfect character; but recounting the merciful dealings of the God of providence and grace with a sinful mortal.

The life of Jacob divides itself into four periods; the first of which will be the subject of this lesson.

I. The years of his youth spent with his parents.

1. Before his birth a divine intimation was given to his mother that of her two sons, each the father of a nation, the younger should have the pre-eminence. Jacob was born fifteen years before the death of Abraham, and twenty years after his mother's marriage with Isaac. From Gen. xxv. 26, we learn the meaning of his name: a supplanter, or one who will be successful by cunning.

2. His early character was distinguished from that of Esau. Esau was of a chivalrous, military turn of mind; full of enterprise, and spending much time in the exercise of the field and the forest. Jacob was a more domestic character, preferring the quiet employment of the pastoral life; and, somewhat like the father, delighting in retirement.

3. The partiality of his mother Rebecca was mindful of the prophecy, but her absorbing partiality was wrong not-

withstanding. The purpose of God referred not so much to the individuals, Esau and Jacob, as to their descendants.

4. His acquisition of the birthright (Gen. xxv. 29—34). The birthright involved—(1) Authority or precedence over the rest of the family ; (2) a double portion of the inheritance ; (3) the priesthood ; (4) the benediction, or prophetic blessing, which was not a mere good wish, or even a fervent prayer only, for the welfare of him who obtained it, but a prophetic oracle which predicted infallible events, reaching to the most remote futurity. Esau's conduct in bartering the birthright was therefore profane. He sinned not only against himself, but against his descendants.

Let us not be impatient of temporary inconveniences. In Esau the clamour of appetite drowned the voice of reflection. Let us beware of following his example in a matter of yet greater importance, and not part with our interest in God, and Christ, and heaven, the illustrious birthright of the saved, for the paltry consideration of the world.

On the other hand, Jacob's conduct in this affair was mean and bad. Both the buyer and the seller are to be condemned. Jacob had not, as yet, a renewed heart. He was to have the pre-eminence, but certainly not by these means, which brought their own punishment.

5. The same remark applies to the manner of his ob-

taining the blessing itself (Gen. xxvii.) St. Augustine apologises for him on the ground that as he had obtained the birthright he could say to his father, "I am thy first-born," that is, "I represent him"; but this apology is altogether insufficient. On this transaction we observe (1) that the progenitors of the Messiah were elected of God—separated to that purpose—Abraham from the Gentile mass; Isaac from the other sons of Abraham; Jacob in a similar manner. (2) That Jacob and Rebecca were believers in this divine purpose; but sought the fulfilment of it by human means of their own devising, and those dishonourable and wicked. (3) That Rebecca's punishment was that she never saw Jacob again; and Jacob, who became a man of many troubles, was driven into exile, where he spent the best portion of his life in servitude and hardship.

LECTURE VIII.

JACOB.—THE TIME OF HIS EXILE.

THE second period of Jacob's life embraces his exile in Mesopotamia. Mark,—

1. His outset in the pilgrimage of life (Gen. xxviii.) He went forth with his *father's blessing*. Children should ever

be desirous of this. And he went forth with his father's charge. Those who have the blessing must keep the charge. There is a promise and a charge given by our heavenly Father to each of us (2 Cor. vi. 17, 18), but to obtain the one we must observe the other. In reference to Isaac's charge, we may remark that a good father is anxious to preserve his children from connections which would entail upon them a life of misery here, and endanger their salvation for ever.

2. The good omen at Bethel. Jacob left home in an humble and repentant frame of mind. During the forty miles' walk of that day he had many deep thoughts, and knew somewhat more of himself and of his necessities. At nightfall he was houseless and alone, yet not alone, for God was with him. He prayed, and then, having a stone for his pillow, he slept. But his mind was awake, heaven opened on his view, and he saw visions of God. We have seen a track of splendour thrown by the moon on the sea, and Jacob saw a still brighter track falling on the sea of space below, and forming a road on which cherubim and seraphim could travel. The angels of God ascended and descended upon it, and perhaps their waving wings shed refreshment on his burning brow and calmed the fever of his mind. The vision was an emblem of providence, illus-

trating the connection between the visible and the invisible, between the earthly and the heavenly, and teaching us that all things are under the supreme control of God, whose will is fulfilled by created ministries. Jacob was now assured of the guardian care of heaven. "I am with thee, and will keep thee." Happy if we hear the voice, and so believe and obey as to be able to say,—

This awful God is ours,
Our Father and our love ;
He will send down His heavenly powers
To carry us above.

But the vision was also illustrative of the mediation of Christ. He, the Son of God, was at the summit of the ladder, and the angels of God ascended and descended upon Him (John i. 51).

Jacob saw, heard, and awoke out of sleep, and overwhelmed with awe, placed the stone on which he had slept as a memorial of the event, and called the place Bethel, the house of God (ver. 16—19), where he offered his vows and consecrated a tenth of his property to God. The vision is replete with instruction to you. You are just on the outset of the journey of life ; but the providence of God is over you, and yours is a portion of the great inheritance. Do as Jacob did. You have a revelation in the gospel both of

providence and of grace. Believe it, respond to it; dedicate yourselves and all you have to the service of your God, and vow you will be His in every step you take.

3. His engagement with Laban, and his marriage (chap. xxix.) Laban was a sordid character, and Jacob might have learnt to correct certain faults of his own from their odious appearance in another. He had long to serve for a wife (ver. 20), but then love lightens labour for the sake of its object. But he was disappointed (ver. 25). He who had been a deceiver was here himself deceived. We are often reminded of our sins in their appropriate punishment. The Saviour and Judge of all has told us that in the affairs of this life, with whatsoever measure we meet it shall be measured to us again.

In Jacob's twofold marriage we see how unfriendly the institution of polygamy is to the true peace and happiness of the family.

4. His prosperity in acquiring wealth. Laban was poor on Jacob's first coming, but God blessed him for Jacob's sake. The manner in which Jacob, though oppressed by Laban, increased his possessions seems to have been the effect of Divine interposition, both in pointing out the way and in blessing the means (chap. xxx. 34—43).

[This is doubtful, as the means were fraudulent. Jacob

had not yet become thoroughly honest and upright. He was the supplanter still. "Unchecked by honesty or conscience," says Dr. Kalisch, "he began to carry out his unprincipled stratagems; he heaped new and greater shame upon himself, well aware that a special providence watched over him (ver. 30), but unable to use this goodness of God as a support and a guide, he turned it into a snare which entangled his mind; he did not blush to invoke righteousness and justice in his fraud (verse 33), as he had before abused the name of God for a deliberate untruth (xxvii. 20)." It is evident that Jacob had yet much to learn before he would become what God intended him to be.—T. S.]

LECTURE IX.

JACOB.—HIS RETURN TO CANAAN.

THE entire alienation of all the members of Laban's family from Jacob was such that he found it impossible to keep up even a semblance of friendship with them any longer, and therefore resolved to leave (chap. xxxi. 1, 2). But like a reasonable and good husband, he explained to his wives what he was about to do (ver. 4—16), and, unknown to Laban, they set out on a long pilgrimage; but after they

crossed the Euphrates Laban overtook them, in the Mount Gilead, which joined the range of Lebanon. Here, however, the Lord interposed for the safety of Jacob (ver. 29), and Laban was unable to do him any harm. The protection of good men is often owing to God's control of the consciences of bad men ; at the same time, it may be observed that Laban's willingness to be reconciled is a lesson for those who have any controversy with relatives.

Jacob arrived at the brook Jabbok, a stream which rises in the mountains of Gilead, and runs onward to the Jordan, and here found himself again on the borders of the Holy Land. And just as, when years before at Bethel, he had left the precincts of that land, so now he was favoured with a supernatural token of the immediate providence of God. This was a most seasonable grace, for it was a time of great need. Esau, whom he had once and again so deeply injured, and whose vow of vengeance was yet upon him; Esau, who from the blue mountains of Edom, where he now reigned as a powerful chieftain, had kept his eagle glance upon his movements, was now speeding to meet him. Jacob had been forewarned of this. "Thy brother Esau," said a messenger, "cometh to thee, and him with four hundred men." This intelligence at once awoke within him a sense of guilt, and a fear of retribution, and in these circumstances

the mercy of God is his only refuge. He prays, and with the fortitude obtained in prayer, he addresses himself to this perilous stage. "And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him" (chap. xxxii. 1, 2). When he saw them, he said, "This is God's host!" and he called the name of the place Mahanaim; Mahana signifies a camp or host, Mahanaim two hosts, as a vanguard and a rearguard. (Comp. 2 Kings vi. 17; Psalm xxxiv. 7; Zech. vi. 4, 5; Heb. i. 14.) God's people may ever say,—

Though destruction walk around us,
Though the arrow past us fly,
Angel bands from Thee surround us;
We are safe if Thou art nigh.

But though thus strengthened in his confidence in God, yet believing that Providence operates most commonly by the use of appointed means which man is bound to employ, he felt it his duty to make suitable provision for the safety of the family (ver. 8), and then he again betook himself to prayer (ver. 9—12). Once more he resumes his arrangements, and completes his plans for the crisis which was approaching (ver. 15—25), and now came a most important epoch in Jacob's history, and in that memorable night he became a new man. Urged, in this time of necessity, to seek the mercy of God, with a deep sense of his past and

present sinfulness, he finds that mercy in a full salvation, to the lasting satisfaction of his soul.

His family, servants, herdsmen, and flocks, were all now on the other side of the stream. He had seen them over in the latter part of the day, and as evening came on he was alone in the solitudes of the desert. All around him was tranquillity, the voices of the people across the waters and the bleating of the flocks had ceased, and probably the stars of the night were reflected in the waters of the stream, but he felt that the time was not a season for repose, but for reflection, for repentance, and for prayer. As the night deepened he entered into an agony of supplication. The wickedness of his past life rose up against him ; the nefarious means by which he had sought the possession of that holy thing which God would have given him in His own appointed time in the way of righteousness, now overwhelmed him with repentant shame before the eyes of Him who seeth in secret; and his uplifted eyes streamed down his sunburnt face with tears of contrition, and his lips were burdened with reiterated prayers for pardon and peace.

While thus engaged, he became aware of the presence of another. The heart often sees what the eye cannot see : and now an unknown person stood before him, and Jacob received a conviction in his inmost consciousness that the

Being who now laid his hands upon him was One who, though apparently in the form and lineaments of a man, was more than human—One who now came against him as an antagonist with a just cause of displeasure—One who was able, and who might not be reluctant, to confer on him unbounded and eternal blessings.

Over the whole of this transaction there hangs a certain obscurity which it is impossible for me fully to dispel. Yet, though the narrative is couched in mysterious phraseology, it is nevertheless sufficiently intelligible to all who read the Word of God with religious dispositions ; and such will not be slow to imprint upon their hearts the solemn lessons they will not fail to learn in considering it, and in reading the account (ver. 24—32 in connection with Hosea xii. 3, 4, and Gen. xlviii. 15, 16).

1. The first question which arises refers to the Person of this nocturnal visitant. Who is it whom the awe-struck shepherd beheld in this apparition? We need not here use a multitude of words—it was the Son of God, and the Redeemer of mankind. It was He who now appeared in the semblance and form of that human nature which, 1700 years after, He took in reality, and made His own for ever. You have only to consider the terms in which He is described in the sentences just read, in order to arrive at this conclu-

sion as the only sound one. In them He is first expressly called a man (ver. 24); on the other hand, He is expressly called God, for "Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, for he said, I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved" (ver. 30). In like manner the Person Himself says to Jacob, "Thou hast power to prevail with God" (ver. 28), and the prophet Hosea says, "By his strength he had power with God, even the Lord God of hosts; *Yehovah Elohe ha zebaioth* (xii. 3, 5). He is therefore the God-Man. He is called an *angel* as well, we know—Hosea xii. 4—"Yea he had power over the angel, and prevailed,"—but He bears this title as the Malah-haberith; the angel of the covenant, whom, in the fulness of time, the Father sent forth to save us; whence Jacob, referring to this event in his last days, speaks of Him as *hammeleck ha goel othi*, "the angel which redeemed me" (Gen. xlviii. 14). We need not err, then, as to who he was: He was Jacob's Redeemer and ours—Jesus Christ, the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever; and Jacob probably recognised in Him the Saviour foretold in the first promise, and revealed to, and believed in by, Abraham and Isaac, his pious ancestors.

2. The certitude of the Person who was now with Jacob will clear up all doubt as to the reality of the transaction.

Eminent commentators, indeed, have been, and are, of opinion, that these transactions were altogether imaginary, and that what is here described as actually done was only done in the entranced fancy of the patriarch. Such, for instance, was the judgment of Calvin, in many respects an admirable commentator, and with him concur Dr. Hiss, a German expositor of eminence, and Dr. Grandpierre, of Paris. "A kind of mystery," says Krummacher, "beclouds this narrative, which treats a simple dream-vision, as it truly was, as if it were an actual reality." Hengstenberg argues that "a man could not, by bodily wrestling, be said to prevail in prayer," and Umbreit expresses his conviction that so long as we adhere to the literal meaning of the words, a deep night envelopes the subject, the darkness of which is not dispelled even though the sun rises upon Jacob. So among our own countrymen, Boothroyd, Hunter, and others, think it extremely improbable that Jacob should wrestle at all with a man in that solitary country. But what does all this reasoning amount to in the face of the narrative before us? It is given in the same historic style as all the memoirs of Jacob's life which precede and follow it; and with equal reason might we resolve the whole biography into a fable. No man among them doubts that the presence of the Person who stood before Jacob was the

real presence either of an angel or of the Redeemer Himself, but does not the reality of the antagonist, if I may use such an expression, betoken that the conflict itself was equally real. It may be thought, as Dean Milman did, that it was too great an act of condescension on the part of the Son of God to stoop so low, as thus to wrestle with a mortal man ; but what condescension is too great for Him who in after times submitted to be spat upon, to be smitten in the face, to be crucified on a cross, and buried in a grave ? Besides, in the narrative itself there is the assertion of a physical effect which demands an equally physical cause (ver. 31). Did Jacob become lame for the rest of his life by dreaming a dream in his sleep ? No ; instead of being asleep we venture to affirm that he was never so truly awake as then. Compared with his present state the whole of his past life had been a dream. It was the hour of his true awakening, for the veil was now taken from his heart. Moreover, he now received a new name ; but no authenticity could be given to a name received in a dream. Were I a claimant for some estate in a court of law, what would be thought of me if the only proof of my right to it I could give was that I had dreamed I had become heir to it ? And will an Israelite tell you that he bears that princely name because his ancestor dreamed he received it ? The same argument

applies to the blessing. Was it not a real one? Would Jacob have been satisfied of this had he only received it in a dream? * We conclude, then, that it was a literal transaction which took place, though of the most solemn and momentous kind.

3. But though thus actual and real in itself, the transaction had nevertheless a spiritual or emblematic import. The wrestling was a material fact, but was participated in by the celestial person with him, as the means of giving Jacob a more convincing and abiding sense of the reality of what should now take place between them. The spiritual exercises on which he had been and still was engaged all centred in prayer—prayer offered to One whom he had long ago and often since offended; One whose displeasure he had incurred rather than deserved his blessing; but One who, notwithstanding, could be prevailed with to pardon with a divine beneficence, and to crown his importunity with the triumphs of salvation.

Of such a prayer the act of wrestling was designed to be the typical representation. Such a mode of divine instruc-

* This view of the case is maintained by Kurtz, by Wordsworth, and by Dr. Goodwin, the American editor of "Lange's Commentary on Genesis," p. 554 (Clark, Edinburgh).—T. S.

tion was in harmony with many of the divine dealings with the saints under the Old Testament dispensation, in which the sublimest spiritual truths were often pictured forth in mere types and hieroglyphs, in objects, or in actions. So here wrestling denoted prayer—the prayer that prevails with God. In Jacob's particular case it was prayer with these characteristics.

1. It was prayer attended by contrite grief for the sins of the past and the sinfulness of the present. Life was looked at more in its true revelation—its vacancy of good, its repleteness with evil. His sin against his father, and his sin against his brother, now filled his bosom with wonder and remorse. He felt, too, that he was now under the immediate eye of the Holy One, and the sense of his iniquity became more profound and effective. Of Him he had heard by the hearing of the ear, now His eye saw Him, wherefore he abhorred himself, and repented in dust and ashes. “He wept,” says the prophet, “and made supplication,” welling up from the deepest fountains of his soul with anguish, contrition, and shame.

2. It was prayer prompted by ardent and irrepressible desire. He agonized for *pardon*; that was the mercy without which nothing that Heaven could bestow would give him peace. He longed to know that his iniquity was

blotted out, and his sin purged. He wrestled hard for PARDON, and along with forgiveness he knew would be granted the assurance of safety for himself and his children, and the legitimate enjoyment of that prophetic blessing which he had formerly sought by means the remembrance of which now filled his soul with the loathings of bitter shame. But now he was seeking the birthright in the right way. He had once heard it indeed spoken upon him by the lips of his deceased father ; now, while the sense of sin is so alive within him, he feels as if he had no right to that blessing, nor can he now consider it as properly his own until he hears it from the lips of God his Redeemer. "I will not let Thee go except THOU bless me."

3. It was prayer marked by the entire abandonment of self-dependence (ver. 25). This has a spiritual significance. Till then he stood in his own strength ; but now he had no standing strength of his own, and the alternative had come, either to sink altogether, or to keep from sinking by hanging on another. Thus it is with the penitent in prayer for salvation and eternal life, when, by some new and more powerful stroke of conviction of his own utter want of all worthiness in himself, he is only preserved from despair by depending on a Saviour. The language then is : "Thou hast weakened my strength in the way ; Thou hast withered

up the spurious vigour of my fallen nature ; and, now *my* strength is gone, henceforth Thine shall support me, for I will not let THEE go."

4. It was prayer characterized by resolute and invincible perseverance. He knew the worth of the blessings for which he sued, and the value of the present opportunity for obtaining them. All that Jacob wanted He could give on whom he laid his steadfast hold — protection, salvation, blessing: all were his with Christ ; all without Him were lost. Hence he was resolved to hold fast, for his grasp was that of despair.

In vain Thou strugglest to get free ;
I never will unloose my hold ;
Art Thou the man that diedst for me,
The secret of Thy love unfold.
Wrestling, I will not let Thee go
Till I Thy name, Thy nature know.

5. It was prayer crowned with triumphant success. Weeping had endured for the night, but joy came with the morning. The dawn broke both without and within. The mysterious visitant, as the column of light rose upwards in the east, revealed His purpose to ascend to His own place ; but Jacob would not let Him go. All hope would go with Him, and therefore he held Him fast with immutable resolve. And thus proved and found indefectible, his stead-

fast faith receives its earnest of reward. "What is thy name?" said the angel; and he answered, "Jacob." The very name was a confession: it meant the false one, the deceiver, the supplanter, the betrayer, the liar; and he that confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall find mercy. Hence the name was changed. "Thy name shall no more be called Jacob;" for thine iniquity is blotted out, and thy sin is no more. And with the cancelling of the wickedness of the old nature comes a new one; and of that new nature the token was a new name. "Israel shall be thy name; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." Again, with pardon, peace, and renovation, came the blessing. "Jacob asked Him, and said, Tell me, I pray Thee, Thy name." But why ask after that which is ineffable? The name could not be told. Yet He who is named fully by no name reveals to Jacob His all-sufficiency, and shows this ransomed sinner who He was by those communications which made him an heir of grace and glory; for *He blessed him there*. At Peniel Jacob saw the face of God, and lived. It was the day of salvation. It had dawned, but it will never end. The sun arose upon Jacob as he passed over Peniel, but the daylight with which it bathed the landscape was but an imperfect type of the heavenly radiance which flooded the inner world of his

rejoicing soul. Before him the Sun of Righteousness had risen with healing in His wings.

1. Let me remind you of your need of deliverance. Not Esau with 400 men, but death and hell, following with its endless multitude of terrors, comes to meet you ; but God is your hiding-place, and will save you from trouble, and will compass you about with songs of deliverance. You need, too, in the days of trial, protection from calamities which otherwise will be your certain doom, and you need the birth-right of the saved—the blessings of grace and glory which are only theirs who have it.

2. To obtain them you must have a personal interview with Him with whom Jacob wrestled at Peniel. Invoke Him, and He will visit you ; pray, and He will be present before you. He promises to be found of you. He now stands at the door. But you must seek Him as Jacob did, "*alone.*" Some connect the idea of conversion with a crowd. They wait until they can pray in the tumult of a Revival. But why wait for that? You will gain more advantage alone with Christ ; and before a Revival comes you may be dead. The accepted time is to-day. Besides, if you do not pray alone, and for yourself, all other prayer avails not. Even in the midst of multitudes it must be between you and Christ.

3. In pleading in the presence of your Saviour, your prayer must have the same qualities as those of the prayer with which Jacob prevailed : it must be repentant, resolutely earnest, persevering, and in sole dependence on Christ. Flee, then, to Him for refuge. Pray that He may save you to the uttermost ; may clothe you now with the white robe of righteousness, and write upon you His new name, and the name of the city of your God.

LECTURE X.

JACOB'S INTERVIEW WITH ESAU.

WE have learnt by the foregoing that sin works its own retribution, but that pardon may be found by the repentant before God. Here we learn that a man reconciled to God is not exempt on earth from trials and painful discipline.

We left Jacob trembling with the dread of meeting his brother ; but now, fortified by a rich measure of God's mercy, he finds that when a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. Esau's first intentions were no doubt hostile ; but God can make a good man's foes become his friends : Esau was reconciled,

and displayed such generosity as put to shame those nominal Christians who can never forgive an injury (xxxiii. 1—61).

Jacob now removed to Succoth (verse 17), a name signifying tents or booths; and then went to Shalem, in the neighbourhood of Shechem. Here he erected an altar, first, in thankfulness, and secondly, for the sake of his family. Where we have a home we should always have an altar. And he called the altar El-elohe—Israel, thus commemorating the name he had received from God (verse 20). Our honour becomes such indeed when consecrated to God's honour. Jacob came to Shechem in peace with God, with his brother, and with himself; but now the lessons of discipline were applied, and for some years the life of Jacob was overclouded with cares and sorrows. This world, even to the children of God, is not a scene of untempered tranquillity. Life is the time of trial—of the trial of our patience and obedience as well as of our gratitude.

The sorrows of Jacob were now occasioned by the circumstances of his own family. When providence has made all things quiet and prosperous without, many a family is disturbed by the folly and misconduct of one or more of its own members.

I. Jacob had trouble first on account of the shame and disgrace of his only daughter, Dinah, then sixteen years old,

(ch. xxxiv). From her case young persons may learn the necessity of caution as to the company with whom they mingle. What sad effects often arise from one false step! From that unhappy visit there resulted loss of peace and honour, distress to her parents, death to many unoffending people at Shechem, and the guilt of murder incurred by her brothers.

II. A second heavy affliction was caused by the grievous depravity of his eldest son (ch. xxxv. 22). By this sin Reuben lost the birthright. It was a deed of darkness and horror, and "Israel heard of it," and was overwhelmed and dumb. This sorrow pressed his heart even in death, and Reuben, stripped of honour, heard with his father's dying breath a confirmation of his shame.

III. A third source of sorrow was the death of dear friends and relatives. We have in chap. xxxv. notices of the death of three. (1) *Deborah*, an old and faithful servant of the family, and much lamented by them all (verse 8). The place where they buried her was called *Allon-bacuth*, which signifies the "Oak of Weeping," and indicates that many tears were shed on the occasion. (2) *Rachel*, Israel's beloved wife (verses 18—20). She died at Ephrath, in giving birth to their youngest son, Benjamin—the son of the right hand. Verse 18 indicates that death is the departure of the

soul; and she died in sight of Bethel—the house of God. Happy they who die in prospect of the gates of heaven, the everlasting house of God. (3) Isaac, who gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days. He was buried by his sons Esau and Jacob, most probably in the grave at Machpelah.

IV. Another cause of sorrow was the supposed loss of Joseph (chap. xxxvii.). This was almost the severest trial of all; for Jacob, when he heard of it, “rent his clothes, and put sackcloth on his loins, and mourned for his son many days” (ver. 34).

But in the midst of his affliction the patriarch was strengthened and consoled again and again by the manifestation of the presence and favour of God (xxxv. 1, 9—13), and the effects of these manifestations were domestic reformatations (verses 2—4), and Jacob’s renewed devotion to God (vers. 13—14).

Let us not be unsubmitive when called to bear the chastisement of Him who only disciplines us by them for an eternal repose; for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth (Heb. xii. 6—11).

LECTURE XI.

JOSEPH.

ONE day, towards the close of the nineteenth century before Christ, a party of Midianite or Arabian travellers, with a train of camels laden with the merchandise of the East, entered Egypt from the desert, and bent their way to a royal city called On, or Heliopolis, the City of the Sun, one of the great marts of commerce in that country. Among this band might have been observed a friendless and dejected youth of seventeen, a captive, and, as such, already a slave ; and within a day or two he is transferred by purchase to the proprietorship of an Egyptian nobleman. This youth was Joseph, the beloved son of Jacob and Rachel.

Meantime, his aged father had been plunged into unspeakable distress, which the untimely loss of a son, who had been the chief object of his affections on earth, would no doubt occasion.

I. What were the circumstances which gave rise to this calamity ?

1. Undue partiality on the part of his father (Gen. xxxvii. 2, 3). It is unwise in parents to prefer one child to another,—to make those distinctions which tend to cause strife.

Perhaps, also, Joseph occupied that place in Jacob's heart which belonged only to God.

2. The influence of resentment, jealousy, and malice, on the part of his brothers (vers. 4—20). It was the affliction of Jacob to have evil sons. Perhaps he himself was to blame for this by neglecting them in their youth.

3. The dispensations of that Divine Providence which knows how to make even the wickedness and folly of men subservient to its own purposes of wisdom and goodness (Gen. l. 20, xlv. 8).

II. What course of conduct did Joseph pursue in the midst of the trials to which he was exposed? His biography presents an impressive example of the genuine virtue and of the rewards attendant on it.

We observe—

1. That the principles of a virtuous person will, in the present life, be put in one way or another to a practical test. This was the case with Joseph in the house of Potiphar (chap. xxxix. 1—13). This is a picture of great depravity on the one hand and of incorruptible integrity on the other. Joseph was upright towards God, his master, his master's wife, and himself. He had a firm hatred to sin (ver. 9). The words in the original are very emphatic. "How can I do this! this wickedness! this great one! and sin against

God?" True virtue springs from piety—the fear and love of God. The moral law was felt, then and acknowledged, though it had not yet been spoken on Mount Sinai. We may observe too that one vice is seldom the solitary tenant of the heart. The evil wife of Potiphar is not only willing to be faithless to her husband, but becomes also the slanderer, and, if possible, the destroyer of his true-hearted servant (vers. 13—19).

2. In the present life a virtuous person is often called to the long exercise of patience under ill-treatment (vers. 19, 20; Psalm cv. 18; 1 Peter iv. 16). He was two years in prison, was enslaved in person and defamed in character; yet he sustained this trial with meekness and patience, trusting in God, and doing His will in the condition of life in which His providence had permitted him to be cast.

3. Righteous men have, in the midst of the sufferings to which they may be exposed for the trial of their fidelity, many unfailing consolations. Joseph had the testimony of a good conscience (xv. 14, 15), the divine blessing which had been with him in the family of Potiphar came with him into the prison itself (xxxix. 21—23), and under these circumstances the prison was a happier home than a palace.

4. Perseverance in a virtuous life leads infallibly to great

rewards. There is a *recompense* of reward hereafter (James i. 2—4, 12). The reward of the righteous is sure, but the bringing it about may be slow. Our trials require time, and the ways of Providence are not unfolded in a day. In Joseph's reward he was not only destined to be happy himself, but to be the instrument of great good to his family, and to the multitudes beside.

A great calamity was about to come upon Egypt and the surrounding countries, of which Divine Providence gave a merciful warning to Pharaoh in a dream. There is sometimes importance even in the fleeting dreams of the night. They are monitions from Him whose all-penetrating eye looks through the veil of futurity, and orders far distant events in such a way as to make them conduce to the fulfilment of His own benevolent will (chap. xli. 1—7). The dream baffles the skill of the interpreters (ver. 9). The Egyptian priesthood at Heliopolis were esteemed the most learned men in the world, but Joseph's wisdom surpasses theirs, because he was taught of God. But how came Joseph into the presence of the king? To see this we must go back to the prison where we left him (xxxix. 21—23). When Pharaoh was perplexed about his dreams, and was at a loss to find an interpreter, the recollection of Joseph's skill occurred to the butler's mind : he recounts the circum-

stances to the king, and Joseph is summoned into the royal presence (xli. 8—16), and he interprets the dream by the inspiration of God (vers. 25—32).

Along with the interpretation of the dream, Joseph was divinely taught to give such counsel as the emergency required (chap. xli. 13—37), and these proofs of heavenly wisdom gave Pharaoh the conviction that Joseph was the man who should be entrusted with the important business now before them (vers. 38—41). Thus we see Joseph raised to great honour. He passed by a stride from a prison to a principality. He was raised to be what they called the Grand Vizier, or first minister of the kingdom. "Them that honour Me," is the promise, "I will honour." And in this, the reward of Joseph, is the type of what awaits the faithful servants of God ; not indeed in earthly grandeur, which must speedily come to an end ; but in an inheritance which is incorruptible, a nobility that is never to be impaired, and a crown of life that fadeth not away.

II. What events followed the exaltation of Joseph? In following the events of this beautiful history of the ways of Providence, we find that the scene alternates between Canaan and Egypt,—between the hut of the father and the palace of the son. Two years of famine have brought many a family into great distress, and, among others, the family of

Jacob in Canaan are in want of bread. They hear of the stores of corn in Egypt (chap. xlii. 1, 2), and the ten brothers at Jacob's request go into that land which was to be the scene of 'oppression and bondage to their descendants (vers. 3—5). Mark,—

1. The first interview between the brothers. Joseph knew them, but they did not recognise him. Fifteen years had altered the youth whom they had sold; and he spoke to them in Egyptian, through an interpreter, and they had no idea that in the Egyptian prince they beheld their brother. They do him homage (ver. 6), and thus Joseph's dream (chap. xxxi. 7) is fulfilled.

But we are not disposed to make out Joseph a pattern of perfection. Among the multitude of characters portrayed in the Bible there is but one such—the Lord Jesus Christ; all besides are men like ourselves. We cannot justify Joseph in his long indifference to his father. Canaan was accessible, but he never appears to have sought him out. So, too, the harshness of his present conduct was somewhat doubtful, though it must be observed that before revealing himself to his brethren he wished to ascertain, first, the present condition of his father and family, and secondly, their present dispositions—with what sentiments they regarded his memory,—whether their ancient enmity to him

extended to Benjamin,—whether, in a word, they were worthy of the benefits he wished to confer on them (vers. 7—24). The brothers had committed towards him a great sin, and Providence now made him its instrument in avenging it. He held in his hand the rod of justice, and he is compelled to lift it against them. Though his disguise was sufficient, yet his very presence seemed to awaken in their minds a reminiscence of himself (ver. 21). While they listened to his voice, their guilty conscience awoke with a tormenting recollection which constrained a confession of their sin. They believed that Joseph's blood was then demanded back. Thus Joseph heard that his father and Benjamin were alive; and that his brothers were sensible of the wickedness of their conduct towards himself. Yet he wished to try them more thoroughly (vers. 25—28). But this required test involved another painful trial for old Jacob (vers. 29—38, chap. xlii. 1—14). It was his last. His weakness,—parental partiality, and the idolatry of a parent's heart for a favourite child, still clung to him. He is now required to part with it, and the last victory is gained, and his remaining life becomes unspeakable peace. The words of ver. 14 are literally, "And as I am bereaved, I am bereaved!" etc. Jacob now finally conquered himself, and achieved the crowning triumph over the weakness of his

own nature. *Jacob* was at last entirely *Israel*; and the fourth and happiest period of his life awaited him.

2. Second interview of the brothers. Things look more favourable (chap. xlii. 15—34). But now a more serious trial awaited them (xliv. 15). They are charged with theft, and Benjamin, who appears to be the culprit, is to be taken from them. This they cannot bear, and full of anxiety and distress they hasten back.

3. Third interview of the brothers. Joseph receives them with a speech of cruel and haughty irony. They attempt no reply. Even Benjamin himself makes no disavowal of being guiltless, nor any remonstrance; and when Judah speaks at last, he refers to the strange chain of events,—to the inscrutable will of God, whose interference had found out their iniquity. But when Joseph insisted on retaining Benjamin alone, Judah, tormented as he was with anguish, could no longer withstand the revolt of his feelings against an act of barbarity which he knew would bring his aged father broken-hearted to the grave. And these feelings urge him to speak, whilst they do not deprive him of self-possession. Stepping forward towards the inexorable man with combined firmness and feeling, he delivered words which through all time must ever affect the heart of the reader. And, moved by the eloquence of facts, not of words,—facts in their own

family history to which Joseph's heart responded in throes of feeling—his filial and brotherly feelings constrain him to discover himself (ver. 14—34, chap. xlv. 1—4): and now new feelings of peace, and new prospects of happiness open on their view.

Who can describe the blessedness of Jacob's heart on receiving the glad-tidings? (ver. 35—38). Thus the ways of God began to be cleared up. The evening of the patriarch's life became calm and serene, and his sun prepared to set without a cloud.

1. In this history Divine Providence is seen to overrule the dispositions and conduct of individuals, and the circumstances of the natural world for the bringing about of its purposes of mercy to families, nations and the world. Let us remember that this Providence still reigns.

2. The word of God says, "Be sure your sin will find you out." What an exemplification of this truth is presented in the history before us! (chap. xlii. 22, xliv. 16).

3. Joseph's conduct is a fine example of an injured person forgiving his enemies, and returning good for evil (chap. xlv. 4—13, etc). In this, as in many other respects, he has been considered as a type of Jesus Christ. (Compare Luke xxiii. 34.)

LECTURE XII.

JACOB'S LAST DAYS.

THE patriarchal family are now settled in Goshen ; the most pleasant district in Egypt (Gen. xlv. 28, 29, xlvii. 27), and here Jacob spends the last seventeen years of his eventful life. We see the goodness and faithfulness of God to him in his latter days, and his character now appears to the very best advantage. Providence and grace had combined to make him an object upon which we can look with pleasure and profit. In him we contemplate—

1. The dignity of the patriarch. As such he is honoured by all posterity. The Almighty was his friend and portion, and called Himself “the God of Jacob.” He now stands before the greatest earthly king, receives honour from him, and confers honour upon him (Gen. xlvii. 5, 10), and thus “the less is blessed of the better.”

2. The sanctity and contentment of the saint. His last days were evidently spent in peace with God, and communion with Him in prayer (Gen. xlix. 18).

3. The faith and hope of the pilgrim and sojourner upon earth. His thoughts wandered away from the present and dwelt much upon the future. He felt himself the heir of a

promise which would be fulfilled hereafter (Gen. xlviii. 3, 4, 21, xlix. 18).

4. The heavenly gifts of the prophet of God. By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit he pronounces the patriarchal blessing upon his sons, and foretells the fate of their posterity in distant times. This was done on two occasions :—

On the first, he blesses the two sons of Joseph ; (chap. xlviii.) where observe (1) Joseph's reverence for his father. He pays him filial attention in his last illness ; furnishing a beautiful example to all who have parents. (2) His parental care. He wishes to secure for his sons, who were children of a Gentile mother, a recognised status among the tribes of Israel. Observe, too, Jacob's love for Joseph, and the honour and blessing conferred upon his children. They might have been numbered among the nobles of Egypt, but a greater glory awaited them—that of being numbered with the people and princes of God (vers. 12—20).

On the second and last occasion Jacob exercises the prophetic gift on behalf of all his sons (chap. xlix.). His dying couch becomes, as it were, a throne of light, from which he looks into distant centuries, and foretells the lot of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Reuben (vers. 3, 4). As the firstborn, he could naturally

claim the threefold prerogative of the birthright ; (1) the double portion ; (2) the principality or chieftainship in the family ; and (3) the priesthood. But through his wickedness (chap. xxxii. 22) he lost the whole. The first was given to Joseph, the second to Judah, and the third to Levi. Thus parents, by their misconduct, may injure the interests of their children.

Simeon and Levi (vers. 5—7). They were brethren in folly ; and their sin also, in the murder of Shechemites, meets with its punishment. They were divided in Jacob, and scattered in Israel, and accordingly Levi was dispersed through the country without a territory ; and Simeon's scanty lot was situated in different parts of the land (Jos. xxi. 3, 4).

Judah. His name signifies praise. His noble lot was to be one of dignity, victory, strength, and prowess (vers. 8. 9). His kingly and law-giving power would be continued for ever in the person and reign of the Messiah who would descend from him (ver. 10). Under his sceptre all nations will be gathered, and the establishment of his kingdom will bring the days of peace, prosperity, and joy (vers. 11, 12).

Zebulun was to be a maritime tribe, with a territory on the west of the Mediterranean Sea (ver. 13).

Issachar would be an agricultural and rustic people (ver. 14).

Dan, though the son of a concubine, should rank as a tribe among the sons of Israel with an authority like their own ; and they would maintain this power more by cunning than by arms (vers. 16, 17).

Gad would have hostile enemies at the first, but would succeed in overcoming them (ver. 19 ; comp. Judges xi.).

Asher's inheritance was to be distinguished by its fruitfulness and opulence (ver. 20).

Naphtali would be a populous tribe. He is compared to a spreading oak, or tall terebinth (Sept., comp. Num. ii. 29, 30.)

Joseph, Jacob's most beloved son, was also the beloved of the Lord (Deut. xxxiii. 13—17). His portion comprises the richest blessings for time and for eternity (vers. 22—26). The tribe of Joseph consisted of the families Manasseh and Ephraim, to the latter of whom, especially, many rich promises are made in other parts of Scripture.

Benjamin was to be a warlike tribe, distinguished for its martial valour (ver. 27 ; comp. Judges xx.).

And now the time of Jacob's death had arrived. He had fulfilled his pilgrimage, and was about to enter the rest which remaineth for the people of God. His faith is attended with a divine peace, and, in his latest hours, he gives, with perfect tranquillity, his last directions respecting

the place where his ashes were to rest, to await the call to the better resurrection. He passes away into everlasting life with the dignity of the patriarch, the clear vision of the prophet, and the hope of the saint. "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his" (Num. xxiii. 10).

The Egyptians, of all people, paid the greatest attention to the remains of the dead. They are celebrated for their effectual method of embalming the human form. This practise originated, perhaps, in the necessities of a country where the land being flooded with water during a considerable period of the year, the act of burial was almost impossible, so that it was necessary to adopt means for the proper preservation of the remains of those who, during that time, were called to pay the debt of nature. But in addition to this, they had religious motives in embalming the dead,—from the belief that it was necessary for the repose of their souls.

Jacob thus dying in Egypt was embalmed (chap. l. 2). The time for this purpose required forty days, and the days of mourning were seventy days, after which Joseph, who could not appear before the king in a mourning dress, sent a request to Pharaoh by others that he might be allowed to go to Canaan and bury him. The request was granted, and,

as a mark of respect, as the father of Joseph, Jacob was honoured with a public funeral (vers. 7—9).

The cortege arrived at the threshingfloor of Atad, which was upwards of two hundred miles from the land of Goshen, and probably on the east of the Jordan (vers. 10, 11). Here Joseph made a great mourning for his father for seven days, wherefore the place was called Abel-Mizraim, the mourning of the Egyptians. Hence they proceeded to the cave of Machpelah, where, with Abraham and Isaac, Jacob was buried, a circumstance which contributed to deepen the impression in the minds of the Israelites of their relation to, and future possession of the land.

By the removal of their common parent, the brothers of Joseph now felt that they were more fully cast upon the good will of him whom they had formerly injured. They therefore renew the confession of their ill conduct to him, and receive from him the assurance of his forgiveness, and unchangeable affection (vers. 15—21). He survived his father fifty-four years. They were years of peace and prosperity both to himself and to his kindred. During this time his own family increased (ver. 23), and some of his eleven brethren died, and, according to tradition, were buried with their ancestors in Hebron.

But Joseph's honourable career was itself to terminate in

mortality. In this world the paths of glory lead but to the grave. The account we have of his death breathes the same tranquil spirit of faith and hope in a covenant-keeping God, which distinguished the experience of his holy ancestors (vers. 24—26). Joseph was embalmed, and put in a coffin in Egypt ; but many years after his remains were buried in Canaan, according to the hope he had indulged (Josh. xxiv. 32).

Thus generations pass away. The son follows the father, and his son follows him. So it has been ; so it is ; so it will be with us and ours. Let us live accordingly, numbering our days, and applying our hearts unto wisdom, that our lot may be with the good both here and hereafter.

The life of Joseph is a spectacle of excellence with scarcely a shadow upon it. A dutiful son, a forgiving and affectionate brother, a faithful servant ; virtuous in temptation, patient in adversity, humble and generous in prosperity, graceful in person, but more beautiful in mind and disposition ; dignified in station, wise, prudent, and beneficent—his life and death are an illustration of the beautiful sentences of the word of God—"Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him ; I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him ; I will be with him in trouble ; I will

deliver him, and honour him ; with long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation " (Psalm xci. 14—16).
"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright : for the end of that man is peace " (Psalm xxxvii. 37).

THE END.

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